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THE

VOYAGE OF THE FLEETWING

A

NARRATIVE OF LOVE, WRECK, AND WHALING ADVENTURES

BY

C. M. NEWELL

AUTHOR OF "KALANI OF OAHU," "KAMEHAMEHA THE GREAT," ETC.

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INSCRIBED TO MY FRIEND

G. D. Gilman,

WITH EVER WILLING REMEMBRANCE OF THE LONG-GONE DAYS WHEN WE "GAMMED" IN THE SOUTHERN OCEAN, AMIDST THE ADVENTUROUS SCENES OF WHICH I WRITE.

THE AUTHOR.

857178

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THE

VOYAGE OF THE FLEETWING.

CHAPTER I.

RAYMOND'S LAST NIGHT WITH MARY.

IT was approaching the midnight hour of a beautiful September night. The broad harvest moon was riding high in the zenith of an almost cloudless sky. Large and full, as in fact only a full-orbed moon could be seen on the meridian at such an hour. The few fleecy clouds seen occasionally drifting past the moon, lingered briefly in the enticing luna-light, until each, in turn, became glorified with a halo of purple and gold. This was the Night-queen's insignia, bestowed upon every luminous mist which timidly came to pay homage at her throne.

At the open window of a lofty cupola, which adorned one of the pretty dwellings on the hillside of Purchase Street, New Bedford, there sat two youthful lovers gazing out over the housetops, and far down upon the bay, which shone like silver in the mellow sheen of the splendid night.

Hand in hand sat these two inamorati, silent as statues, watching the moonbeams flood the whole wide landscape with radiance, until every rugged outline softened into beauty. Watching the yellow rays brooding over the

hushed town, like the fostering wing of some hallowed spirit inviting all to slumber.

At times their gaze extended to the opposite town of Fairhaven; but mostly their eyes dwelt upon some object of unusual interest far out in mid-river, some centre of sadness, half akin to sorrow, to judge from their sober looks and the deep sighs which winged out over the night from the cupola window.

Anchored here and there about the harbor lay the outbound ships, with their white wings folded, peacefully slumbering in the weird and misty light. Yet these seagoing vessels would sunder many loving hearts at the turn of the morning tide. One vessel, more attractive than all others, lay like a spirit-ship in the shimmering beam, showing more artful taper to her graceful masts, a greater mystery of shrouds and stays, and a yet more delicate tracery aloft among the mazy network of ropes and rigging. Just where she was anchored the moon-touched waters gleamed like a mirror, every ripple on the surface glittering like starlight in the swift running tide.

As the solemn chimes of the midnight clocks ushered in the new day, it startled the lovers from their long revery of mingled emotions, for it admonished them that the hour of separation drew near. The youth rose and looked out over the bland night, questioning with searching eyes for some forecast of wind for the coming day.

The breeze was just enough to frolic playfully with the ringlets of the young girl in the cupola.

She was a gentle dark-eyed creature of eighteen summers, with a full, voluptuous figure. Her face was beautiful as the night she looked upon. Her clear olive com-

plexion was made doubly fair by the yellow moonlight, stirred as she now was at the thought of parting, and by the open admiration and outspoken affection of her companion.

There was a sad, solemn tenderness in the young girl's eyes as she gazed skyward, seeking sympathy in the cold calm orb above, while her lips quivered with emotion as she murmured a half-audible prayer. With her face thus turned to the sky, the affluent curls of her blue-black hair hung gracefully about her white shoulders and bare arms; elements of beauty to which a sailor strikes his colors quicker than to any other charm in his ideal woman.

Yet it was a weak, irresolute face which the ardent lover looked upon so doatingly. Its want of character was fully confirmed by the full red lips of her small sweet mouth, together with the languid, indolent expression of her large soft eyes. Yet the girl's eyes could beam with love most eloquently, and her lips tempt to kisses like the cleft crimson of an over-ripe pomegranate.

It was not so much the girl's callow youth, her eighteen gentle summers, that made her puerile and passive, as it was her unbalanced character, which left her too thoughtless and frivolous to value the virile qualities of the youth who now proffered his love.

The companion of this fair night-elve was a youth of twenty-two years, a manly, noble-looking sailor, having the easy, commanding air of an officer. His blue frock and navy suit, together with the broad white collar turned over his coat, would further indicate that he was a son of Neptune, even if his bold, frank sailor air was not sufficient to dispel all doubt.

He was the chief mate of the clipper ship Fleetwing, which had so greatly elated the town just then. The mate seemed too young to fill such a responsible berth in the pet ship of a great whaling mart, judging by the small mustache, his only semblance of a beard. Yet there was a sterling something about the appearance of Charles Raymond which stamped him as a well rounded, cultured man. True, his assured manners and look of superior intelligence were no evidence of his having had sufficient whaling experience for his office.

Until this late hour of his last night's wooing, Raymond had not fully determined whether Mary Tudor really loved him or not. The girl had evidently been subjected to some powerful restraint, perhaps some strong maternal command not to commit her young heart too deeply to this as yet untried youth. A New Bedford method of experimental billing and cooing, all too prevalent in other great seaport towns. A sad, cruel ordeal for a tender-hearted girl to be subjected to, taught to secure dual strings to her flimsy bow.

Mary Tudor had known her lover only a short time. Three months previous, Charles Raymond's ship came sailing into port full as she could stagger, having a rich cargo of sperm and whale oil. For weeks after her arrival the town was alive with gossip about the young second mate, to whose skilful lance the rich voyage was largely due.

It was truly said of him that once Raymond's boat got fast to a whale of any kind, it was sure to be captured. He would stick closer, hang on longer, and take more risk of losing his head, than most men cared to do.

Throughout the voyage, no other officer ever succeeded in killing a whale that Charlie Raymond was fast to.

In a special whaling port, an officer thus endowed easily becomes the lion of the hour. His fame interests every marriageable maiden in the place. Conniving mammas deem such a person a "good catch," a "rising man," stuff from which "lucky captains" are made.

Mary Tudor was thought to be greatly favored in securing the first opportunity to flaunt her colors before the young officer. Delighted and amazed at her beauty, Raymond had backed his topsail on the instant. The young sailor was too fresh from the briny deep not to consort with the first fair face and bright eyes that signalled him in the offing.

It was then that the girl's mother came forward, and weighed the youth in her matrimonial balance, and finally peddled him out one of her least nubile daughters. Having four others on the docket, Mrs. Tudor gave Mary characteristic instructions:—

"Mamie, the young chap is a trump card, though too fond of peril for a 'wait-over.' Bait with a gay hook, and you'll catch him. Fish for a 'catch-penny' wedding before he sails, or throw him over to the next one. Keep your heart out of the matter, my daughter, and remember, don't engage yourself to wait over a voyage; for the fellow is sure to lose his head before he is a skipper. Now mind, Mamie, for you're good property to keep over for a full-fledged skipper."

Love at sight is an honest trick of sailors. So long are they debarred the sight of lovely woman that when they do get ashore, and clap eyes on a lovely face, they down

helm at once, let fly sheets and tacks in the wind, and come to anchor in a jiffy.

It is a charming sight to view Jack's rising emotions when he first sights a pretty girl in the offing. The jolly fellow laughs all over his face, as, with arms akimbo, he deliberately notes the cut of her jib, the swell of her bows, and the graceful motion of the dainty craft as she careens to the wind, and lifts to the sea.

Jack sails wholly by dead-reckoning while on shore. His land atmosphere is then so greatly befogged that he cannot obtain real latitude by the sun. Thus he hastily moors ship alongside of the first dear creature he meets, hoping to secure his "lay of the land," and anchor for life.

This sort of love-making is very contagious with the fair sex. Jack's saline magnetism has an overpowering quality. Going to work as he does with his heart in his hand, and his soul in his eyes, he easily overcomes the feeble broadside of a shore girl's conventionalities.

The fault of a girl's thus yielding to such tidal waves of marine love is that it makes a too willing prisoner of the maiden, so bewildered by Jack's novel sea-fog, without fairly captivating her heart. Thus, when the conquering hero makes sail on his next cruise, the girl's delusive love takes wing, and, alas, she finds herself yielding the helm to the next noble sea-lion who sails athwart her hawse.

At the end of his three months' wooing, Raymond still found himself "all at sea" in the matter of love-making. He was not yet quite certain but Mary's previous listless response to his own strong affection was the most he ought

to expect from an immature girl. He could not doubt but the girl loved him after the fashion of such coy maidens, for she never tired of receiving his kisses, fondly holding his hand, and laying her downy cheek to his, so browned by the sea and the sun. The entrancing creature had learned to sigh lustily at every mention of parting, and her eloquent eyes were ever ready to read him a sweet homily of love. But all these passive methods of love-making were as the light of a farthing candle to Raymond's passionate yearnings for her, and she failed to fill the aching void in his heart.

But now when Mary was reminded that the parting hour had come, the nerveless girl woke as from a trance. The impulsive outlet given to her pent-up feelings amazed her lover, who was in no wise versed in the conflicting mazes of a maiden's heart.

Raymond broke the long silence by abruptly addressing the girl as he rose to leave her and go aboard his ship, which was to sail in the morning.

"Mary, my darling, you don't seem to realize that this is my last hour on shore."

A frenzied look came into the face and eyes of the girl, that was sad to behold. Her lips quivered with emotion as they moved with a voiceless sorrow she could not disclose. She clung to her lover's hand with an impetuous grasp, as if to detain him. With an answering look of sadness, he continued to address her: —

"I *must* leave you, dear girl; duty calls me to the ship. The storms and sunshine of many a clime must be encountered before I meet you again. I leave you, to be forgotten, or perhaps remembered only for a day." These

words imparted power of speech to the grieved maiden: "Oh, no, no! Please don't say that. It's so cruel for you to think that of me, Charles Raymond." And Mary burst into tears, adding, between her sobs: "I don't forget my friends so easily."

"Friends!" vehemently echoed the fiery youth. "If friendship is the strongest sentiment you have for me, I reject it. You know I love you. May I not hope for a dearer title to my Mary? Tell me, darling girl, in one word, if I am loved or not."

Mary buried her face in her hands, and sobbed aloud with bitter anguish. The influence of the hallowed night had filled her young heart with love, unspoken and almost unutterable. Now the sentiment of parting had broken down the flimsy barrier erected to shield her heart at the senseless parental command. The crisis of the parting hour had unmasked poor Mary's ambushed love, disclosing it to herself as well as her lover, though her mother's cruel injunction still rung in her ears.

Raymond drew the sorrowing girl tenderly to him. Parting the dark hair from her brow, he pressed a fervent kiss upon her forehead. The inexperienced youth was still in grave doubt as to the cause of Mary's sorrow. But catching something hopeful from her tender, tearful condition, the warm-hearted sailor drew her tightly to his breast as he whispered:—

"Mary, Mary, my precious girl! Tell me if I read your tears aright. Tell me in one little sentence if I am loved. Then absence and distance, storm or sunshine, shall become as nought to me. For I will take with me such an image of your grace and beauty that it will reflect

like starlight in every billow which rocks me in the cradled deep."

With dilated nostrils and wide appealing eyes, Mary raised her tear-wet face to Raymond's, that with his own eyes her lover might interpret her grief aright. In answer to his words, she threw her white arms around his neck while an exquisite glow of affection illuminated her face, though as yet she was unable to master her sobs sufficiently to speak.

Raymond turned her face to the westing moon, and let the yellow beam stream over it at will. Betwixt hopes and fears he searched for some stronger confirmation of her love than smiles and sobs. His enamoured eyes revelled in the girlish charms before him, until his ardent gaze brought back the native crimson to her cheeks.

"Do you really love me, Mary?" persistently asked her lover, in a half doubting tone. The girl was startled with a look of surprise and pain at the question. Her dark eyes broadened and brightened as she scanned Raymond's face to catch the source of his doubts.

"Oh Charles, how can you doubt it? Should I willingly lie here in your arms if I did not love you dearly? How have you failed to discover my affection for you, long ago? You can't expect girls to be as outspoken about their love as men, — especially sailor-men, who are always ready to eat a girl up as if she were confectionery."

"Perhaps you are right, dear Mary. I wish I could believe you love me half as much as you think you do. I don't seem to discover quite enough of it to outlast a three years' voyage. You know New Bedford is a sad place for shipwrecked lovers. A true-hearted girl should

be moored by her best bower, if she wishes to hold fast to her anchorage through a long whale-voyage."

"Then why not give up this hateful voyage?" she replied, petulantly. "How dreadful! to think you have won me but to leave me; just as mother said you would. You have taught me the rapture of a bewildering love only to plunge me into the depths of sorrow by desertion. Is there not room on the land for you to make a home for me?" And Mary further pleaded her case with appealing eyes.

Raymond could not gainsay the truth of much she said, but he smothered her unjust demands with kisses; until they clung to each other with mutual affection. The girl's grief at length gave way, taking wing she knew not how.

"Mary, you speak truly. I have won you but to leave you. But your own sober sense would not have me give up the sea. It is my vocation; I love it, and it has fostered me with a kindly hand. Do not distress our last moments by such a thought."

"But if you should be wrecked and lost to me, now that I have centred my affection upon you, what would become of me?"

"Fear not, little darling; the Heavenly Father protects us as readily on the sea as on the land. As for storms, my pet, we love them as you love the sunshine, if but the wind blow us fair. All sun and no cloud is the whine of a land-lubber, not the plea of a sailor. God made the sea for none such as they. Let such spoonies be content to dig the earth, sow the land, and get kicked to death by a donkey."

The dreadful night clocks now struck three with a

heartless clang that took the lovers by surprise. Poor Mary's face blanched to the pallor of death as she realized that their separation could no longer be delayed.

"So late!" exclaimed Raymond, as he sprung up from his seat. "I must be gone. The mate of the Fleetwing should be at his post. It bids fair for a breeze, and we shall sail at the first run of the ebb. Besides, I should not have kept you up so late."

"So soon!" pleaded the love-lorn girl, clinging to her lover as he rose to go. "Oh, how can you leave me yet? Promise me that you will write often, by every ship homeward bound. And for my sake hasten your return."

"Yes, dear Mary. But remember many months elapse between our ports. Write me by every ship sailing for Honolulu — our mail port for the voyage. And now one more token from my darling."

"What shall it be, dear Charles? You already have my picture."

"Yes, and a dear sweet prize it is. I must have a tiny bit of yourself. The veriest little crinkle from your daintiest curl. Only such a treasure can conjure you to my side when yon moon keeps watch with me on the sea."

"Take it. Take all you wish, my own dear sailor-boy."

"This will do. Now for a little star through which to commune in the night watches, when the lonely heart yearns wildly for another, and we lean a listening ear out against the silence of the night, hearkening for the heart beat of one we love."

"Why not choose Venus? the lover's own peculiar star?"

"Not that, for the very reason you say. It is too common. We want a little twinkle of our own, one that every brawling tar shall not pollute when he toasts his wanton."

"Then, dear, you must make choice of one. Why not one of your bright lunar stars?"

"Could you find Aldebaran?"

"Oh, yes. 'Tis the brightest of the virtuous Hyades, directly overhead, in the figure V, on the angry head of Taurus. Nightly the fierce bull dares Orion to combat."

"Then Aldebaran shall be our own star. 'Tis red as Mars to-night, and always easily found among the broken clouds."

"And it's so near the pretty 'Virgins of Spring,' sweet daughters of Atlas. For thy dear sake, Charles, I will emulate their virtue."

And she smiled sweetly on her admirer, and put up her small red lips for guerdon. How sweet a thing to learn is love! Where has the coyness of this timid maiden gone?

"Bless you, sweet love! for your promise and your kiss. You shall yet become the sweetest Merope among the stars. Nor shall your brightness wane, as did hers of old, for condescending to a mortal love. When the fierce Bull is again in the zenith at midnight, remember to yearly pluck a blossom of its ripening and send me, and I will do the same wherever I am."

"When will that time be?"

"If you nightly confess to our little red twinkle, you will not fail to know. The constellation of Taurus divided the sidereal year for the ancients. Its rising at sunset on November 20 marked the beginning of their winter.

Its rising just before sunrise, the 20th of May, denoted the beginning of summer, as there were but two seasons, of six months each, in those days.

"Thus, Mamie, remember the Arabic origin and signification of Aldebaran. As it once 'led the way for the whole starry hosts,' so may it now become the arbiter of our fate, and lead my way to fortune and to happiness in thee."

"Dear love! I doat upon our little star already, and I will nightly search the sky for it when I invoke the divine blessing upon my noble sailor."

"Bless you, dear, dear Mary. The dawn approaches, and we must part. One last kiss and I'll go."

"Not yet. You have not given me a lock of your hair."

With a touch of impatience Raymond clipped one of his own brown locks and gave her. Tears gathered in her eyes as she received the token. Hastily she bound the tress with a tiny ribbon of blue — a sailor's color — pressed her lips to it, and dropped the little treasure into her bosom.

"One word more, dear girl. The disclosure of your love has come so suddenly that I have doubts of its lasting quality. Let us make oath to remain true till we meet again. Here in the hallowed presence of our Maker, I swear to love you — and you only —until my return, if you keep tryst with me. Will you respond, little darling?"

"Yes, oh yes, by any oath you please," and with almost hysterical sobs and tears Mary Tudor betrothed herself by a yet more solemn pledge than Raymond's.

"I have asked this, dearest, because New Bedford is famous for its heartless women. Their deceit has crushed more brave hearts and true than all the world beside."

"I am glad to strengthen our troth-plight, I do love you so."

"In the morning, Mary, when the sails are all set on the Fleetwing, let me see you here in this trysting-place. Wave your last good-by with this scarf, and watch for my return signal as I stand on the bow taking the anchor."

Snatching a last hasty kiss from the weeping girl, Raymond gently tore her tightly clasped arms from his neck, breathed a heart-felt prayer for his new-found treasure, and tenderly seated her by the cupola window, sobbing as if her heart would break.

Quickly descending to the street, the young officer hastened to the wharf, where he had ordered a shore boatman to meet him an hour before. Little did either of the sad lovers then deem that any mortal could ever sunder their strongly plighted loves.

CHAPTER II.

THE SURLY OLD BOATMAN.

FILLED with mingled emotions, Raymond hastened to the wharf, where he had ordered a harbor boatman to meet him at three o'clock, though it was now nearly four. As he was a man to require promptness in every one, and had so impressed this upon the old boatman, the late hour was a source of mortification to the young officer, for the boatman was already growling lustily as he brought his boat into the wharf. Hence the unseemly haste in parting from his lady love.

How terrible the separation had been to him none but a young lover thus sundered for years can know. Yet it was a glad sustaining thought to remember that he took with him the plighted love of a beautiful girl. Every thought of his Mary filled him with ecstasy as he remembered her fond arms about him, and it required a strong effort of will to restrain him from returning for yet one more interview with his darling.

While the boatman was hauling in to the steps, the mate turned to seek the moon, now low down in the west, to note the passing clouds for indications of wind on the coming day, half wishing that a head-wind might delay their sailing, so thoroughly bewitching is the thraldom of a first love.

While Raymond was looking searchingly into the sky, there among the red lunar-rays he suddenly beheld a vision of his Mary, dimly portrayed upon the fleecy clouds which thinly veiled the moon. Her white arms were stretched down to him from the sky, with supplicating gestures that seemed to call him back to her.

Though the vision vanished instantly, there was no mistake in what he saw. A deathly chill crept over him. His soul was tortured, and his strong young heart almost rebelled. With the superstition common to all sailors, Raymond felt that the portentous event was ominous, and he unwillingly believed that he should never behold the fair face of his Mary again. He almost feared she was already dead, and the beautiful apparition he had seen was her departed spirit, winging its way to the elysium beyond the stars.

Had not the boat banged against the wharf at that moment, and dispelled some of the visionary part of his delusion, the call to duty would have failed him, and he would have returned to Purchase Street. But the gruff voice of the surly old boatman was sufficient to arouse him. He descended the slippery steps and seated himself silently in the stern of the boat, to be rudely greeted with impertinent questions, surmising his previous whereabouts.

"Well, matey, you've had yer last look at 'Heart dig'; fur a fine breeze am brewin' fur yer sailin'."

"Hush! you old sinner; or I'll cast you into the water as food for the sharks. You've mistaken your man this time."

"Is thet so? Then I ax yer parden, mister, fur 'tis

not of'en I'm called ter ferry ar parson or ar Puritan 'twixt midnight an' marnin'."

"Pull away and be silent, if you wish me to remember you've waited an hour extra for me this morning."

"Sickness, or piety kept yer, mister?"

"Silence! I told you, or you'll not get your extra pay for waiting."

"Ay, ay, sir; silence it am. But et strikes me thet I cussed yer for a picter o' promptness, ez yer wuz minded ter spake 'bout whin yer hired me fur three in ther marnin', prompt on ther p'int."

"There, that will do; pull away."

"Ah, weel, jist ter think how I mought o' bin snuggled up ter me old 'oman an hour longer, but fur thet picter o' promptnis, ez yer call it."

"Well, well! pull ahead, you old torment. Lengthen the stroke of your port oar, and forelay for the flood tide in the river."

"Right, sir, yer am. Whin ar chap like me takes ter entertainin' an angil in disguise, he's moughty apt ter furgit ther spring tide thet's runnin'."

So the imperturbable old boatman continued his humorous gab. He was oftenest called upon to ferry some night prowler coming from a debauch, from whom he failed not to elicit an exorbitant fee, in just accordance to the amount of poor whiskey or brandy smash each delinquent contained in his skin. Even in Raymond's case, the blear-eyed old shellback greatly feared he was being played upon by one of the pious sons of Bacchus. For it is a source of pride with these boatmen never to be outwitted by the morally disposed "rum ones."

"Say, mister, the sarvice wuz ar leedle late on this 'casion?"

"Avast there! you're yawing the boat down stream again. Steady, so. Now see if you can't belay your jaw-tackle. I've that on my mind just now that don't abide your social greetings."

"Ay, ay, mister. I'll be glum ez a church mouse. Jist let me count me beads fur ter exorcise ther divil, in fear there mought be ar hoof in yer 'onor's boots, 'sted o' five 'spectable looking toes."

"Confound you!"

"Please, mister, don't swear, ez I'm religiously inclined, like. You'll obsarve it becomes a honest boatman ter be purtic'lar whin called on ter pull ar mish'nary chap at four in ther marnin'."

"Is there no way of keeping you silent, you infernal wretch. Who are you? What's your name?"

"Bliss yer 'onor, it's arter some kind 'membrance that ye'd keep o' me fur ar futer job in ther marnin'? Thar wuz a name gin me et ther 'atchin', but, bein' uv ar big brood, 'twas lost 'fore I got plumed out. So, mister, I hitched onter 'nother un. Johnny Jones, at yer sarvice, sir, ar quiet boatman thet I am."

"Well, Jones, I'll avoid every fellow of your name hereafter."

"Thet's ar wrong reflicshun, sir. I niver peach on ther young uns fur ther night work. I'll not spake ter ther parson or ther timp'rance men 'bout its bein' four in ther marnin'. You tips us ther shiner, an' I shall spake uv it ez but ten in ther evenin'. Ar bully voy'ge ter yer, mister, fur here we is 'longside ther clipper."

The boat drew up to the gangway, and the darkey shipkeeper swung out the manropes just as the moon was dipping down over the hills. Raymond doubled the fee of the tattling old boatman, and drew himself glibly up the ship's side.

"Say, nigger! yer know who thet ere chap is?"

"Yes, it's the mate."

"Hokey! Thanks ter yer, Mister Mate. Call 'gin, sumtime, an' I'll not ax ef yees divil or angil, ef yer allus pays wid ther yeller uns."

Bidding the venerable old shipkeeper to call him with the sun, Raymond passed into the cabin to change his 'longshore toggery for a rig more suited to his sea duties on the day of sailing. Betaking himself to the sofa in the captain's cabin, he was soon lost in deep repose.

CHAPTER III.

WHARF SCENES ON SAILING DAY.

THE sailing of the Fleeting was long remembered in the great whaling port of New Bedford. She was the first built of the famous clipper whalers that had such wonderful success in the Arctic and Ochotsk seas.

Though the day broke pleasant and promising, yet not a breath of wind stirred in the harbor until the turning of the late morning tide. People bordering on both sides of the Acushnet were greatly interested on the occasion. Old and young climbed to the housetops, or embarked in boats of every description about the harbor.

The native heredity of sailor-born children is a most remarkable patrimony.

So strong is the shinning propensity of these unfledged sailors on sailing day, that every urchin born of web-footed parents may be seen climbing the lamp-posts and mounting the trees. Even creeping infants — Jack tars in pin-feathers — aspire to climb beanpoles and broom-sticks, in justifiable emulation of their daddies.

It is not too much to assert that many of the monkey-toed sailor-progeny of New Bedford were born with little marline-spikes in hand, though we are fain to believe that the modest town records have never recorded the fact.

Early on this eventful day, more than a thousand sea-going men gathered about the wharves, eager to render officious aid to the departing ship; all executing various nautical evolutions of importance as they came upon the scene. Some were seen hastily coming to anchor, in mortal fear of being too late for the occasion. Others were laboriously getting under way, shifting their anchorage for a better view. While some, more indolent than their fellows, lazily moored ship on an old cask for the day, or gallantly caulked down at full length on the unoccupied cap-logs of the wharf — intent upon remaining until starvation compelled them to unmoor.

The most weather-wise of these old shellbacks were seen cockbilling their bald heads to starboard or a-port, squinting alow and aloft to note the "mare's tails" in the horizon, and the "mackerel-back sky" above, cunningly estimating the chances of a coming breeze for the new ship. These prodigies were the revered oracles of the port, to whom the venerating crowd willingly furnished "pigtail" and hardtack that they need not shift their quarters for the day.

Joking aside, there is certainly a three-corned attic chamber moored somewhere under every sailor's hat, wherein he carries a full rigged "Weather Bureau" — a ready reference for all time. What a quaint-looking receptacle it must be; decorated with salt-smelling sea-shells, dried kelp, and mermaid's hair; together with stuffed Mother Carey's chickens, and a full-fledged gony over the door.

Hidden away in these grotesque "bureaus" the briny old tars keep tally of wind and weather, and the course

and distance to every land; together with photographic views of every rock, shoal or headland they have ever seen. So constantly is Jack's attention given to meteorology during his long voyages, that atmospheric phenomena become a sort of third nature to him — rum and tobacco being recorded as his first and second natures, with lobscouse and hardtack sandwiched in somewhere between.

Such being the case, one would expect to find an odd mixture of calms and storms, squalls and doldrums, lying around confusedly in a tarry sailor's noddle-box. Yet it is not so. Question a venerable old shellback about his half-century of seagoing life, and you will find his log-books and mental records of the Horn, Cape Frio, or St. Helena all clearly kept in his methodical mind, as clear as is his subtle knowledge of the ship's vast snarl of ropes, stays, shrouds, and bobstays, matters ever confusing to a landsman.

Everything about the wharves on this particular morning was in the greatest state of disorder, yet it must have been a very paradise of propriety to Jack. Some of the ships had just arrived from a three years' voyage. Some had discharged their oil, which lay tiered at the base of the wharf thickly covered with seaweed. Other ships were lying completely dismantled, their masts stripped to a girtline, as if the final hour of dissection had come.

Several vessels were hove down keel out, in the hands of the noisy caulkers, whose great floating stages were moored alongside; whereon was mounted the boiling pitch-pot, and the crate of hemp oakum — priceless perfumes to Jack's olfactories. These ships were having

their bottoms scraped and caulked, and being newly sheathed and coppered for a voyage — and many a sly sailor watched that the job was well done, if he intended to go cruising in the craft.

About the outfitters' shops, along the adjacent streets, were also gathered every grade of seaman. The crude-looking land-lubbers made themselves most conspicuous — ardent youths dressed somewhat too previous in their awkwardly appearing sea-rigs — outsailoring the saltest tar in the crowd.

But the real simon-pure sailors were also abundant among the group. The rollicking, rolling, devil-me-care salts, wearing blue trousers and flannel shirts, their shining tarpaulins tipped with a list a-port; these were the solid substantial seamen. Men who could not only "hand-reef-and-steer," but could also house a topmast, or rig a "jury," and pull a feathering oar that never tires. The counterfeit of such men — base skulkers, who ship to do a sailor's work that they never learned — are deemed baser coin afloat than any fraud known to the financial world ashore.

The sedate and well-mannered officers were there — men dressed in 'longshore toggery of frock-coat and white shirt. These notables are the mates, the boat-headers, who can bring the claret from a running whale by pitching their lance from the tip of the flukes into the palpitating hollow over the shoulder. Most of these were dignified, noble-looking men, wearing manly, open faces that would be a passport anywhere.

Numerous boat-steerers could be discovered here and there among the vast jumble of sea-craft. Men who find

caste somewhere between the cabin mates and the forecastle men; a high grade of the best class of seamen. Real heroes, who delight to toy with a fighting whale as a child plays with a kitten. Chaps who are often thrust just the length of the boat nearer to a mad whale than a timorous officer likes to venture himself. They are easily distinguished by their dainty blue jackets, low-quartered shoes, and French calico shirts.

With a boat-steerer it is etiquette to dangle a flashy handkerchief from the left breast pocket, and to assume a little nautic roll in his see-saw gait, imitating an Indiaman rolling down to St. Helena.

The boat-steerer is an aspiring genius, always having an eye to his duty on shipboard; a careful, painstaking man, who mixes his grog a trifle too thin to make drunk come, ever aiming to become an officer. He is thought to be excusable for always talking about harpoons, and the way to dart them. Innocently illustrating his methods on a sure dart by letting fly a carving-fork at the cat, which foolishly leaps through the window, frightening the household by smashing the glass, going lick-it-to-cut to windward; thus keeping up the farce of a mad whale running in the wind's eye.

The boat-steerer also has an alert eye to becoming a family man — like his superior officers — and the cute ones among the marriageable girls discuss his qualities with wonderful acumen, seeking to tackle the web-footed fellow to shore harness in good time. It is he who is often seen sailing down the street wing-and-wing, a pretty girl on each yard arm. Not that this animated piece of whaling-gear seeks to become Mormonistic,

looking to marry both girls, — only that the marriageable girls of New Bedford are so eager, you know. And then the brave harponier also seeks to show his shipmates the wonderful prestige he has acquired among the shore beauties by his daring deeds on the past voyage. He is thought to be less harmful when thus tackled to two beauties than when he swaggers around among the cats and puppies with a carving-fork in his hand.

Among the eighty ships lying at the busy wharves, or anchored in the stream above Palmer's Island, were many fine vessels, built on approved modern moulds, but none that had ever attracted such attention as the clipper ship Fleetwing. She was indeed a sight to gladden the seaman's eye, with the fine curves of her hull, and her taunt and taper masts.

Thousands of eager eyes viewed her from the housetops and the crowded wharves, impatient to see her sail. The long snakish hull was painted black as a raven's wing, slightly relieved by a red line along the planksheer and a broader ribbon of white around the main rail. Though some of her lines were radical, yet they were graceful and symmetrical in every feature. Her extreme sharpness impressed one with the daring of her builder, who had aspired to a wide departure from all previous moulds of conservative shipwrights.

With a length of not more than one hundred and fifty feet over all, the Fleetwing was built to break her water more than forty feet back from her stem. Yet there was such a broad sheer to the bow, above water, that she certainly would not bury in a seaway. Another innovation commented upon was her great breadth of

beam, for the vessel was thirty-two feet amidships, with quick-tapering quarters, ending in a charming round stern, the especial delight of all.

Her figure-head was a gilded sea-bird just unfolding its wings for flight. The beak and neck were stretched out over the cutwater with an eager, alert look, which well personified the name Fleetwing.

A dapper-looking gentleman with a white cravat pushed his way through the crowd on the wharf, and ventured to express his admiration of the vessel; which induced an old gray-headed, pudding-faced skipper to join in the chorus of praise.

"Ay, ay, sir, there's many a fine thing to admire 'bout thet ere new craft. She's modelled by Dan Talbert — her cap'n — an old friend o' mine. An', mister, when I tell yer thet her keel am three foot deeper aft than for'ard — with a round forefoot at thet — ye may well wonder at the novelty o' the ship."

"You *do* amaze me, captain. Isn't that an unheard-of innovation?"

"Not exactly. Cap'n Dan tells us he got the idee from the Chinee sampans, thet have rocker keels, an' am mighty weatherly; an' they turn quick on their centre. While the junks of the Chinee an' the Japs wear ships on their heels, from havin' deep wide rudders. Talbert thinks thet builders pay too much 'tention to the bow parts o' vessels, to the neglect uv a long clean run, an' a deep keel aft."

"How is that, my friend?" The white cravat seemed bent on knowing all about the clipper, or perhaps he enjoyed the quaint lingo of the superannuated spouter.

"Why, sir, it's not so much how a craft grapples her water for'ard, as bein' able to let go the pesky stuff astarn, an' not drag a mile o' dead water under her counters. You see, matey, the Fleetwing's best beam is well for'ard; an' sich a clean run as hern wus never seen 'fore on a craft o' her size. An' jist twig her set on the water! She's lean-bellied as a finback whale — the race-horse of the seas."

"Where does this fine vessel go for her voyage?"

"To the mouth o' the Amoor river, jist the most dangerous whaling-ground ever travelled by a keel. But Dan Talbert an' Jim Allen have got some rousin' voy'ges down the Sagalien gulf, in spite o' the quicksands in the river, an' the northers that blow there."

"What's the trouble about the quicksands?"

"Trouble! Why, mister, a ship in a quicksand sails like a toad in a tar-bucket. If she takes to the ground in a quicksand, she becomes an island in an hour's time. The ship 'City,' o' New Bedford, was lost thet way under me own eye. Then there's the northers; but the deep keel o' the Fleetwing will walk her to wind'ard like a Mother Carey in a Cape squall."

"Why not deepen her keel the whole length of the ship?"

"Bless you, no. Such a craft would travel too big circles in tackin', an' lose all her headway. An' she would take a week o' Sundays to wear ship. Them gales in the Amoor wouldn't stan' no sich nonsense. Shiver my timbers! why, I lost more'n a pailful o' me old gray hair beatin' out o' that devilish place in a storm."

"How was that?"

"How *wus* it! Look you, young chap, the pesky hair stood so stiff with fright that the thunderin' gale carried away every spear by the board. The pigtails down in China seed it comin' an' thought 'twas the Northen Lights shiftin' ground for the Antar'tic."

"Dangerous place, by your account, captain."

"Dangerous, ha! See here, stranger. The Amoor runs straight out into the gulf; the eastern edge is jist five miles frum the shore. Beatin' out 'tween land and river in a gale, there's quicksands on one side an' murd'rous natives on t'other, who'll skin a feller for his hide an' taller. When on the shore tack in a night gale, we trust wholly to the hand-lead, an' go 'bout instanter when we shoal to quarter less five. On the river tack we're guided by the amount o' sand in the water. When nearing the quicksand we draw a bucket o' water every five minutes, until 'tis three sands to one water. Then, sir, — why, hang my toplights! an intelligent ship will go 'bout on t'other tack herself, feared o' bein' made a sand island uv 'fore mornin'."

"So you won't likely cruise there again?"

"Nary a time, you bet. Never'll catch Cap'n Tom in that dreadful place agin. I make a pint o' keepin' on the pious tack, — keepin' the best dead-reckonin' I knows on to 'scape the two most tarnal places in creashun: the hot place the parson *parlez vous* about, an' the infernal Amoor river."

"That's the secret of your piety, is it, captain?"

"Yis, it am. An', mister, I think more uv dodgin' the last place than the fust one. Fur there's a durned sight better chance uv a sinner's weatherin' Tophet with the

lee leech o' his mainsail burnin', than uv savin' his ship beatin' through a quicksand 'gin an Amoor snorter."

"A tough place, certainly. What's the meaning of that gun-fire from the Fleetwing?"

"Thet's a loud call fur the pilot." And the old skipper reflectively watched the gun-smoke gyrating in the air.

"Isn't that the pilot, sculling himself off to the ship?"

"Sure 'nough. Old Ben Aiken has her in hand. Cap'n Dan, wife, and little chick will soon have to cut adrift their land-fasts an' go 'board."

"Does the captain take his wife and child?"

"Yes, matey. An' many a heart-string must go by the board when separatin' fur a three years' voy'ge. When the tide ebbs, I think I'll take one more look 'board the new ship. I'd like once more to feel the sea-motion under sail uv sich a fleet creatur as she am."

"Well, many thanks, captain, for your story of the Fleetwing. I shall remember her with interest after what you have told me. What may I call your name, sir?"

"Tom Coffin — Captain Tom — who dates his title uv nobility from his big voy'ge in the Briganza."

"Ah, Captain Coffin, glad to meet you. I remember your great voyage well. Here's my card, sir. Should be glad to see you at the parsonage in" —

"Oh, hokey! A parson, eh? Wouldn't ye like to go 'board the new ship with me, when the tide turns? An' mebbe you'll parbuckle a blessin' aboard. No harm in sich a article ef it comes frum a honest heart."

"Yes, if it were not intruding too much."

"Nary a bit, parson; onless duty prompts yer to look glum when we splice the mainbrace at partin'."

"No fear of that, captain. If the wine is good, I shall lend a hand in splicing myself."

"Spoken like a genuine buster. I know'd by the cut o' yer jib you wusn't an infernal Pro'bitionist, one who'd water a feller's grog till he couldn't sail on a taut bowlin'. Come round agin when the ship tails down stream, an' I'll take yer off."

"Thanks, captain. I'll be here in time." And the two worthies parted for the present.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FLEETWING AND HER CREW.

THE young mate of the Fleetwing was up with the sun, looking critically at everything about the vessel, preparatory to getting under way. Most of the seamen were on board, and all the officers but the second mate. The crew were set to work tidying up matters here and there about the ship, while cook and steward were preparing breakfast.

Raymond was observed peering zealously about the ship with admiring glances, justly proud of being the chief officer of such a jaunty craft. To him the beautiful thing seemed to be almost a living, breathing creature, a craft born to be queen of the seas. To him there was a wide-awake look about the ship's set upon the water that touched his sailor-heart tenderly. The vessel's gentle tip by the stern was very suggestive to a nautical eye. The persuasive lift of her bow made the alert creature seem impatient to be gone — eager for a tussle of any kind with the boisterous element she was built to subdue.

As Raymond stood on the hurricane-house, looking about, the morning sun glistened on the burnished binnacle-hood, and the brass capstan-head, from which the busy ship boys had just wiped the night dew. The polished

manrope stanchions flashed back the hot beams over the mirrored waters of the bay. The gilded vane at the main-royal truck coquetted timidly with the golden beams, toying daintily with the baffling airs in the upper world, as a maiden's fingers play with her curls in the presence of her lover.

The ship's flags were fetched from the transom locker, and the new ensign was run up to the peak, where it hung limp and abashed from the gaff in the windless air. The beautiful flag was yet unused to its proud duty of symbolizing the nation. The owner's color was set at the main-royal truck, unwilling as yet to unfurl the ship's name, worked by dainty fingers, in its folds. The Union Jack, with its blue ground and white stars, drooped at the fore, a sailing signal which refused to blow forth and notify the world of the ship's departure. Yet its very presence at the masthead brought off countless boats of every description from the neighboring towns.

The tide would not run fair until ten o'clock, — some hours hence, — yet already there was a busy scene about the bay, people eager to watch the sailing, and repeat their oft-spoken farewells to friends on board.

The sails were not yet loosed. Every well stowed bunt shone like a fresh snowdrift in the strong glare of the newly risen sun. The running rigging lay snugly coiled on the belaying-pins, hauled taut and made tidy by thoughtful hands. The windlass-brakes were shipped in their places, made ready to round in the cable with cheery song and chorus.

A large threefold tackle was hanging from a pendant, suspended from the foretopmast head, ready to cast and

fish the anchor the moment it was hove to the bow. The starboard gangway-board was out, and the whip-tackle slung over it from the main yard-arm was frequently kept busy hoisting in the chests, and other sea-truck, belonging to the few laggard sailors as they came on board.

In the brief intervals when no labor was required of them, the sailors were seen scattered about the ship in picturesque groups. A cluster of brand-new sailors were mounted upon the topgallant forecastle, dressed in their new slop-chest clothes of variegated colors, leaning lazily over the bow, bandying wit with the passing boatmen, making a manly effort to hide the sadness now brooding over the hearts of all.

A few young green hands, yet too crude to have learned a sailor's place on board, were lounging over the midship-rail, casting wistful, homesick glances ashore, a heart-breaking sadness vividly depicted on their fresh young faces. To these home-brewed boys the beautiful ship and the strange romance of the sea could not wholly displace the dear home scenes from which they were parted, perhaps forever.

None better than the real sailors know how to hide their sadness and sorrow at such times. Yet their assumed gayety and sparkling wit, and the subtle foil of rude jokes flung at the passing boatmen, cannot always quench the pathetic tear, or subdue the quivering lip, when some loved hand signals a last farewell from the shore.

A gang of experienced seamen were running their eyes thoughtfully over the ship, sharply criticising every new crinkle they discovered, their hearts already filled

with love and pride for the maritime beauty to which they were willingly wedded for years.

Another group of real old shellbacks stood apart from their fellows, with arms akimbo, mounted on the larboard cathead, or astride of the windlass-bitts and the samson post, eagerly scanning every spar and rope with rapt attention. The keen eyes of these aged connoisseurs followed the lead of the great shrouds from the chain-plates to the hounds; traced the taut backstays up to the cross-trees and the bolsters in the dizzy distance aloft, solemnly holding forth upon the strength and solidity of all they saw.

The faces of these venerable sons of Neptune beamed with senile delight at the neatness of everything they looked upon; though in proper keeping with the gnarled character of each, they chuckled and growled over every new-fangled method they saw. Two of these bronzed old sea-dogs were Captain Talbert's pet sailors, older and more experienced than the skipper himself.

The chest of one of these patriarchs was haired like a bison's, as disclosed by his wide gaping shirt, while he pointed out the new rig of the windlass-gear, which he had admonished the captain to use. So by his advice there were patent chain-stoppers which grappled every link of cable that passed the hawse-pipe, by which nothing was lost when the chain slipped on the quick-rolling windlass.

"Ay, Tom," said his companion, "an' twig ye the new method o' holdin' the anchor-ring at the cathead, trippin' the ring-stopper, when lettin' go the anchor, by a blow with a hammer."

The shore and all its pilfering "land-sharks," who for months had played upon the credulity of these salt souls, were already forgotten. They had put off the very thought of the land with good relish, and were at home again upon the deep. One of these brawny fellows clapped his great horny palm on the knightheads where he sat, as he exclaimed, in semi-pathetic tone: —

"Ah, Tom Crawford, me old heart warms to'ard sich a fresh new craft as this un. Her saucy set on the sea, an' the pretty rake o' her spars, pumped a pint o' sweet tears inter me old binnacle-lights as we uns pulled out frum the wharf yester' noon. An' look ye, Tom, when I got 'board her wid me sea-truck, I shinned out onter the bowsprit, soon's me chist wuz below, an' I'd chalked B. Buntlin' on a starboard bunk-board. I moored me by the bowsprit cap, an' squinted at her sheer, an' looked along her lines, till me rusty old heart grew big as a scuttle-butt, for the love of the critter." And spoony old Ben wiped the salt dew from his eyes.

"Yis, Ben, she am ar *be'uty*. But I'm too old to blubber much 'bout new-fangled notions. An' p'raps I's too full o' bilge water jist now, arter our long tussle with the cheap grog o' the lubberly beach combers yonder. But, Buntlin', the chap whose axe hewed out a clean run like hern, to take the gripe out o' her helm in ar sea-way am ar gospil man. An' God bless 'im, say I."

"Ay, matey, the critter'll steer like ar yacht. Not ar chistful o' dead water can play hide-an'-seek 'bout her rudder."

"Why, look ye, Ben, on me last voy'ge in the Skipjack, forty year ago, we carried a school o' minnows an' pilot-

fish under our counter fur years. There wuz a acre o' dead slops dragging arter the humpbacked old critter the whole voy'ge."

"True 'nough, Tom. I 'member gaming 'board thet old hooker. But there comes the pilot. He's scullin' his own boat; whistlin' jigs like ar bugler, tryin' to tempt the clerk o' the weather to make a breeze fur us uns."

"Ay, old Ben Aiken am ar rum un. He carries his big red snout in the air like ar sword-fish worshippin' the sun."

"He sniffs ar breeze, old Ben duz, calm ez it am."

"Well, the sun am less hot than he wuz. There's a wee bit o' scud skulkin' yonder in the nor'west. Gather down out o' this ere, boys. Our bully mate's commin' for'ard to 'wake the dead,' ready to get under way."

"Forecastle there!" hailed the mate. "Belay your yarns to the nearest belaying-pin, and be up and about."

"Ay, ay, sir," answered Crawford.

"Tom, my lad, fling a warp to the pilot. Buntlin', gather up the chain-hooks, and teach some of these youngsters how to use them." And the mate allotted some pertinent duty to all the idlers.

It was not much after nine o'clock when the venerable pilot came up the side. He clutched the manrope stanchions a minute to get his wind after his climb up the side, and then squatted like a toad on the monkey-rail, to take his first view of the new ship. He had kept himself ready to come off at the first indication of slack water, in fear of trouble.

Even now, so evenly balanced were the meeting waters, — the downflow of the river and the upflow of the tide, —

that the ship still tailed against the stream, though she rode boldly up to her anchor by a slack cable.

It was just this condition of things which the knowing old pilot came off to look after; fretting and fuming lest the new craft should override her anchor, and give him a foul cable to deal with when getting under way, an ill-omened event for any vessel to start out with.

A most comical grin crawled slowly out to the tip of his rubicund nose from among the wrinkles of his tanned old face, mounted to his eyes, and there elevated his shaggy brows to a look of surprise, when he saw that the young mate had completely anticipated the whole difficulty.

Raymond had shortened the buoy-rope during the early morning, and brought the buoy plumb over the anchor, that it should indicate just where the bower lay. And he had taken the further precaution to run out a boat-anchor toward the Fairhaven shore, by which a couple of men were even then slowly warping the ship clear of her moorings, fast as the tide slacked on the cable.

A gruff, hollow-bellied laugh was the cunning old pilot's first method of showing his approbation of the young officer's thoughtfulness; sitting there humped up on the rail, grinning a long-continued grin, like a showman's automatic monkey. At length he found voice: —

"Bless our soul! Charlie Raymond, how are ye? I see Cap'n Dan has got the right man in the right place this time. Bright boy, you un. You not on'y know'd what ter do in this kinky river-anchorage of ourn, but, fur ar wonder, you're right 'ere on the spot ter do the proper thing. Many 'nother mate I knows on would be at 'Hard Dig' or 'Dog Corner,' dancing his last jig, an'

sippin' his last glass o' flip with Miss Nancy, 'stead o' lookin' arter his ship."

"That's not my style, Captain Aiken. Captain Talbert don't leave that sort of men in charge of his ship."

"Right, boy. One oughter know an officer by the bringin' up he's had. Mates all aboard?"

"All but the second mate."

"Ah! Dave Braybrook will set ye a hard stint in whale-killin', eh?"

"I've heard he's experienced, and shall get him to teach me a thing or two. Shall we get a breeze, think you, pilot?"

"Yis, yis. A capful on't to start with, an' all you'll want 'fore ye pass the Sow an' Pigs."

"What sign do you see of a strong wind in this flat calm?"

"Suthin' in the air, that rumples me feathers ar bit." And the old pilot shrugged his shoulders and chuckled to himself, casting a sly leer upon the mate with his larboard eye as he continued: "The sun isn't so clear as he wuz. An inwisible haze shaders his picter. Yonder in the nor'west the blue sky is slowly changin' to gray. Signs 'nough everywhere, an' thet's the place we'll git it frum."

"You're a great deal wiser than I am, pilot." At which frank compliment the old seaman looked pleased, and kindly sought to modify the show of wisdom.

"A good deal older, you mean. Old 'nough to forget 'bout the frivilous things o' life, gals an' sich like, an' to larn the 'portance o' wind an' weather. Two things what carries me bread an' butter wid um. 'Twill come to you,

young man, some day, when ye put by all the tom-foolery uv life."

"Aren't you a married man, Captain Aiken?"

"Married! What, me moored head an' starn to a female critter? Did ye iver know ar real weather-wise married pilot?"

"I hadn't thought about that. But there comes Captain Talbert's boat, just shooting out from the wharf. The ensign begins to feel the breeze at the peak."

The grizzled old sea-dog slid nimbly down from the monkey-rail, tossed overboard the ashes from his short black pipe, as he roused himself for the occasion. Turning to the mate, the pilot ordered him to send men aloft ready to take off the yard-arm gaskets from the sails, and gave this further order: —

"Let some light hands stay at the bunts o' the taups'ils, ready to let fall the gaskets at the given word."

"All right, pilot." Tom Crawford was sent up at the fore with some light hands with orders to stay in the foretop and teach the youngsters the proper thing to do. Buntline, with another lot of boys, was sent up at the main, to look after that duty in the same way. Mr. Bailey, the venerable third mate, was given charge of the mizzenmast, its sails and rigging.

It was ten o'clock when this light breeze came flurrying down the river, at the first complete turn of the tide far away upstream.

As Captain Talbert's boat pulled briskly out from the wharf, the clear sweet chimes of the church bells in the two riverside towns locked hands prayerfully over the bay, in solemn benediction over the new bridal of ship and sea.

As the captain's boat came near the ship, bringing not only his family and a lady passenger, but also some of the owners, and the second mate, the pilot gave his orders to man the windlass and hoist the topsail yards, preparatory to making sail.

Raymond mounted the bow, took his place on the knightheads, and pealed forth his orders over the ship like the blast of a tempest. In an instant the deck and rigging were alive with bustling men. The shrill calls of the seaman were heard alow and aloft. The merry songs at the windlass rivalled the cheery hoisting cries of the men swaying up the topsail yards ready for making sail.

Getting under way is a noisy evolution on shipboard; and making sail, a very bedlam of confusion to a landsman. While the real seamen grapple the right ropes, fast as the orders can be given, the green hands are so stunned with the noise, and bewildered by the rapid orders, that their best efforts to be useful are a succession of blunders. The commands at such times must be given several tones higher than the songs of the seamen, the rattle of chains, and the hoarse clank of the windlass-pawls.

But to a sailor's ear, the multitudinous din is like the base peals of an organ, heard above a measured chorus of voices.

To see our sailor-lover of the night before thus active at his post was to behold a marvellous transformation of the man. Raymond was every inch a sailor, and his soul was in his work. Alert and alive with conflicting impulses, a dozen orders were on his tongue in a minute, while his voice rang out over the deck like a tornado, as he hastened the crew to their various labors.

The observing eye of the young mate was everywhere, — now looking down over the bow at the incoming cable, then flinging impetuous glances aloft where the brand-new sailors were seen clumsily taking off the yard-arm gaskets from topsails and topgallantsails, prompting the windlass gang to keep up their merry "flip-flop" motion, and urging the other men to range the chain evenly along the deck; now sending an able seaman to the helm, and a leadsman into the chains, to be beforehand with the pilot, as he saw that the cable was nearly hove short.

When the slack cable was fairly hove in, and the anchor hung "apeak," Raymond promptly lifted his hand to the men for the windlass-brakes to, "Vast heaving!" — and notified the pilot: —

"We're hove short, pilot!" To which was replied: —

"All right. Send a good hand to the wheel, a leadsman in the chains, and make sail!"

"Ay, ay, sir! Aloft there! Let fall your bunts. Away all hands to stations! Stand by to make sail!"

These rapid orders sent every hand to duty, the bewildered green ones following in the wake of the seamen, like the bobs to a kite, standing ready to bowse home the topsail sheets, and hoist away on the halyards. Down tumbled the broad canvas from the topsail yard, followed by the piping, boyish cry: —

"Sheet home! Foretopsail — Maintopsail — Mizzentopsail."

Nimble as monkeys the lively bunt-boys flitted about from block to block, overhauling clewlines, buntlines, and reef-tackles, until the huge sails were fairly set. Mounting in quick succession from topsail to topgallant yards,

and on to the royals; like magic the flopping clews ran out to the yard-arms, and the yards swayed steadily up to the cross-trees. A cloud of span-new canvas soon adorned the beautiful craft, and she tugged away at her cable chain as the rising breeze pressed her sails aback, as if impatient to be gone. Very pretty was the shapely shadow which the ship cast upon the mirrored water, as she daintily curveted to the one side and the other, to the full scope of her chain; like a newly rigged maiden before her pier, bewitched by her own reflected charms.

When sail was made, Raymond's thoughts reverted to the girl he loved. Snatching a moment's reprieve from duty, he glanced at the far-away cupola on the hillside, and saw Mary's white signal just flung to the breeze. Bringing his spyglass to bear upon the spot, he saw Mary's loved figure dimly outlined on the housetop.

With bounding heart he drew out his red handkerchief, and fluttered it in answer. Only a brief moment could he give to the loved girl, for the calls of duty came thick and fast, too imperative to be neglected even for the dalliance of love.

Disturbed by the flood of morning sunshine streaming through her chamber window, Mary woke rosy, and refreshed by slumber, recuperated after her long love carnival of the night, where only the sympathetic moon and spying star-beams had witnessed her betrothal with her sailor-lover.

An oft-recurring flush suffused her face at the thought of what had transpired. With hasty hand she robed herself, and ran with girlish avidity to the housetop, where, from the observatory, she beheld the Fleetwing still lying

at anchor. She was gifted with sailor instinct sufficient to determine that there was too little wind for sailing, confirmed in her conclusion by seeing the ship still trending up the river, held in the strong clutches of the flood-tide.

Going below to breakfast, Mary took occasion to whisper one little sentence in her mother's ear, unfolding all her precious tale of love. The unfeeling smirk which dawned on the maternal face implied that the parent-heart was not of the sentimental order.

Again Mary returned alone to the cupola in time to see a puff of white smoke whirling upward in the morning air. It was the ship's signal-gun calling the pilot to his duty on the vessel.

Seating herself in the window, her heart beating wildly, Mary patiently waited where she could overlook the bay, and observe every movement on the ship which held her lover. The thought of their separation became too cruel, too dreadful to contemplate. Heart-sick with dwelling upon the parting, and her mother's lack of sympathy, the young girl fell upon her knees and sought communion with her Heavenly Father, praying that her new-found idol might be watched over in his perils, and restored once more to her loving, longing arms.

Half frantic with feelings of desolation and despair, she reached out her arms toward the ship, mentally determined to snatch back her lover from this cruel wrong, piteously exclaiming: —

"Come back! Come back to me, my darling! — you who have taught me the precious enchantment of love, imparting to me a sweet, fresh legacy of life, only to snatch it from my grasp as soon as found."

Ah, what sources of crucifixion are these heart-breaking scenes to the loving. It is well a young maiden's heart is so elastic beneath such crucial tortures as these, else it would oftener be riven by the terrible retrocession of the life-current in such hours.

If the rapture of the strong brave youth was so bewildering that, in spite of his resolute character, he found it hard not to return to his loved one, how must it have been with this timorous, sensuous girl, who for the first time in life had pressed the lips of man with love, until now a stranger to the newly awakened emotions of womanhood? Mary had only been permitted to taste from the blissful cup before it was dashed from her lips forever.

Watching with her heart in her eyes, Mary saw the captain and his family board the ship, saw the crew heave the anchor short, let fall their sails, till a vast confusion of canvas hung from the yards. When one by one all the sails were set upon the ship, then, with trembling hands, she flung forth her white scarf to the breeze, till it fluttered down the bay, pointing over the far seaward track, which would soon bear her loved sailor from sight, leaving her nothing but the dear memory of his radiant, royal love.

Sadly she watched her telltale pennant flow in the wind, bearing her last love message to the ship. Spying with her glass, she beheld a quick response come from a dear hand on the Fleetwing's bow. One moment Raymond's red kerchief was held to the wind, and 'twas gone. The task of duty called her sailor-boy from his love.

With streaming eyes and heaving breast, Mary watched the anchor tripped, and saw the ship swing to her course with all her white sails given to the breeze. Gay with

flaunting colors waving from her tapering masts, and the national flag at the gaff, the ship quickly gathered way; then, joyous as a bird let loose, went winding down the bay.

With sobs, and tears, and piteous, pleading prayers, Mary marked the lessening sails until one by one they sank over the blue horizon's rim, then with heart-broken cries she resigned her noble lover to his long ocean home.

CHAPTER V.

WEIGHING ANCHOR AND LEAVING PORT.

WHEN the tide turned, and the time approached for sailing, the parson again made his appearance on the wharf where Captain Coffin's boat was moored. The old whaleman sat perched on the crown of an anchor, spinning yarns to a group of seafaring cronies. He soon discovered the reverend gentleman, and reluctantly cut off his story, securing the ends with a bowline-in-the-bight, convenient for splicing at some future time. Shifting his enormous quid to port, the captain got his rheumatic legs under-way and hobbled to the minister's side.

"Ship ahoy! So here ye am agin, parson; prompt as old Sol at the noon meridian. Right too, you are. Fur a gospil feller who 'spects to turn the key fur St. Peter in his watch below, should never be behind the lighter. Fur sometime, a sinful feller like me mought slip into Kingdom Come without yer *visé* on his passport."

"Perhaps so. But I saw the flood-tide had ceased, and I wished to be on hand."

"Sartin you did. So you've got yer eye peeled fur wind an' water, ez well ez the heavenly way. Boat ahoy! Bring her in 'ere, Billy," yelled the captain to his son, who was in a small sloop-rigged boat within hail from

the wharf. The young sailor had previously hoisted the the mainsail, and had just run up the jib, and was belaying the halyards. Casting off the fast from the buoy, the lad sprang aft to the tiller and put it aport. Easing off his sheet, the boy brought the boat to the wharf, touching the wharf-logs too gently to have broken an egg.

"Bully fur you, me son. You're a chip o' the old block, an' ye was born in a Cape Horn snorter. I calkerlate touch an' go ez a good sailor. Now jump 'board, parson. I'll set ye the example, old coon."

Suiting the action to the word, the wiry old skipper leaped amidships, lightly as a dancing-master; an example his companion, though a much younger man, could not follow.

"Bear away fur the Fleetwing, Billy. Forelay for the ebb, which quickens with the flow uv the river."

"All right, daddy. The ship's hove short, father, an' they're loosing her sails."

"Ah, yis. Down drop 'er taups'ils. Every bunt gasket let go at once. Charlie Raymond has got his new team into workin' order. A man o' war couldn't dun better. You see, parson, the mate o' that craft is one o' Cap'n Dan's own bringin' up. All steel an' whalebone hisself, he means to train every he critter aboard to navigate like clock-work."

"They seem quite cheerful about their work."

"Trew as Moses! Some ships sail to the tune of Old Hundred, yer know. Jist yer listen 'board o' there, parson, an' obsarve the difference."

Suiting the action to the word, the captain put his hand to his ear and hearkened to the cheery song of —

High randy dandy, O-o-o-h!
A dandy mate and a bully crew,
High randy dandy, Oh,
Our jolly captain and wife are 'n view,
High randy dandy;
And look — me hearties — a *baby* too,
High randy dandy, O-o-o-h!

"I hear them, captain. They seem to improvise the song as they go along."

"Yis, yis. Thet's the sort o' bull-beef to sail ar ship with. The mate made choice uv every scalawag in the forc'sle. They're made uv the stuff what never says die."

"How neatly the sails are set."

"Sartinly! Ef you've an eye fur the be'utiful, look at them three taups'ils, set taut ez fiddlestrings — lower yards sprung up at the yard-arms; taups'il yards bent like a bow at the tie. There go the to'gans'ils, sheets an' halyards all running home at once. Up go the r'yals, taut ez ar ribbon. Pretty kites to tip off with. Jist as a woman tips off her headgear with a last bow, to show 'er breedin'."

"She is truly a very beautiful vessel."

"Twig the step o' her masts. For'mast set plumb ez a fallin' arrow. So straight — ez the nigger says — that it leans a trifle t'other way. Round to a bit, Billy, an' let parson make a sarmon out uv this fur the heathen fellers in his parish. Helm aport, an' weather-haul yer jib sheet, an' let 'er drift. What a pictur she am! A neat piece of architectur!"

"Why is the foremast stepped erect, while the other masts are so raking?"

"'Cause the yards at fore an' main are so square — so long — that they need to be thrown apart. Otherwise the sails at the main would overlap the for'ard sails an' cause a back draft, keepin' the weather leech o' the main-taups'il flutterin' when on a wind."

"Ah, I see" —

"Hold yer wind, parson, I've got the pulpit jist now, an' I wanter give yer nuther reason. If the for'mast wus not set plumb in a sharp ship, with a deep keel aft, she couldn't show for'ard sail 'nough to prevent a weather helm. An' a weather helm makes dead water, an' that would slow up her speed."

"I understand it quite well, for I am familiar with ships."

"Sartin' you duz, parson. Fur a minister knows a smatterin' uv everything under the sun. Why, a feller uv your kidney can tell the best way to kedge inter heaven when everything's gone by the board an' there's a 'spicious smell o' brimstone under yer lee."

"Perhaps so, captain. But isn't that Captain Talbert going up the side?"

"Yes, it am, an' we'll board her too. Bear away, Billy. Skute 'longside han'sumly."

"Ay, ay, sir! They're goin' to man the windlass 'gin, father."

"Yis, they'll break out their last foothold from the bottom mud. Steady, lad. Take her to the gangway gingerly. Here we is. Climb 'board, parson, an' no baptisin' tricks, mind yer, if yer am ar Hardshell."

The two cronies climbed the manropes and found their way on board. Going aft, they received a warm welcome

from Captain Talbert, who had gathered his family and visitors by the taffrail; the whole sweep of the round stern being sumptuously provided with a cushioned seat. Here they could witness the doings about the ship, the pilot having charge of the vessel while on board. Word was now passed forward to: —

"Trip your anchor, an' stand by the jib halyards."

A wild shout of song burst forth from the windlass gang when this order was given. The iron pawls clanged noisily as the windlass-brakes went flip-flop in the hands of twenty men.

When fairly hove short — hanging just "stay a-peak" — the anchor clung like a last hand-grip to the bottom of the dear home land. But at length, after a tug of desperation, the great iron fluke let go its hold of the sticky blue clay, and the anchor came dangling up to the bow, ready for the cathook. The tenacious river-mud was washed from the crown and the stock of the great bower, and it was then roused up to the cathead and secured.

The jibs were run glibly up, to cast the ship to port, and the head yards backed by the starboard braces. Making a graceful stern-board towards the Fairhaven shore, the ship hung irresolute a moment in the strong grip of the wind and tide — her sails fluttering their tautened leeches in the wind's eye — then the ship payed off, filled her sails and shot ahead, swinging gradually to her course down the bay.

A tinkling ripple of foam at her bow, a blended murmur of gladness from ropes and spars and sails, showed what delight an inanimate thing may express when let loose, like a bird, to the breeze.

A shout went over the bay from lumpers, riggers, and sailors along the wharves, joined by the town folks, making an uproar akin to the bellowing of a tempest. Housetops and steeples and flagstaffs were made glad with bunting and flaming colors, a pleasant greeting to the beautiful ship as she sped away.

The weather-beaten old pilot swaggered about the quarter-deck, grinning from ear to ear, until the tan-colored face of the wrinkled little man resembled anything but a human visage. He rubbed his rough-skinned hands with glee as he perked his diminutive head aloft, or peered over the side and watched the quickening paces of the ship.

Standing with his spindling bow-legs apart like a saw-horse, the shrivelled little man swayed to the pitch and roll of the ship as she met the bay-swell heaving in, poising himself in graceful accord with every motion of the beautiful craft. Cocking his small gray eyes aloft from sail to sail, he chuckled with delight as he saw the tapering masts bend and buckle to the fast freshening breeze.

Captain Aiken had been a shipmaster a score of years before he became a pilot, and knew the speed and paces of every kind of seagoing craft; therefore his judgment was of the best. This self-assured old skeleton clucked and cooed to himself like a mother-hen calling her chicks for a worm; but as yet he would not exchange a word with any one about the amazing qualities of the ship. Yet all were curious to learn the pilot's opinion, deeming him the best connoisseur of the port.

The wind was well aft when the Fleetwing ran down past Palmer's Island. The great ensign fluttered its stars

and stripes over the man at the wheel — venerable old Tom Crawford — who reverently stood bare-headed at his work, indulging in some sailor superstition about: "the *first* man; the *first* time; on the *first* voyage of a ship." The beautiful new flag had quickly learned its maritime duties with the coming breeze, and now waved a national benediction over the new enterprise and all who had embarked therein.

The anchor had been catted and brought to the bow. The ring-stopper was secured to the cathead, and the chain shank-painter grappled the iron crown fast to the forerail. The iron toe of the great anchor was caught in a well greased shoe, ready for dropping again should any need occur.

The river-mud was cleanly washed from the cable, and the huge chain was neatly ranged along the deck beaft the foremast. The rigging was everywhere coiled clear for running, and the whole deck made snug, fore and aft, for ship work.

A leadsman was stationed in the main chains, who was just then sonorously calling: "Quarter less five!" as he drew up his lead to the song of his craft. Looping his leadline carefully, he prepared for another cast, ready to again give the pilot the depth and nature of the bottom in the twinkling of an eye; for old Ben Buntline had been a leadsman forty years and a day.

Everywhere about the decks men were placed at the braces, ready to cant the yards as the ship rounded Palmer's Island Light, and shaped her course past Black Rock, over toward the squatty Dumpling Light, and half way down the bay.

The wind freshened and hauled to the westward as the ship passed the fort at Clark's Point, and the spoondrift began to fly from her bows. A luminous "Milky Way" flushed the green waters far astern, where the fleet thing had cleaved her maiden track across the harbor.

Looking between Palmer's Island and the Bedford shore, a fleet of forty yachts was seen coming, like a flock of white-winged birds, down the bay. All were eager to test their speed with the racehorse paces of the ship. Captain Talbert's name was upon every lip, for, besides being one of the most successful whalemen, he had modelled the swiftest sailer from the port, if not in the country. The yachtsmen were delighted with her proud and prancing motion as the wind increased and she met the long undulation heaving in from the sea. Their attempt to keep pace with the ship was a source of long remembered fun. They were as evenly matched as the tortoise and the hare.

The bay-shore was flitting past, changeable as a panorama. Rocks, farm-houses, and fruit-laden orchards swept astern, as if bent upon a jubilee on this gala day. The sombre autumn foliage was just beginning to glow with tints of color wherever clusters of maples or birches grew amidst the fading autumnal green. The coastwise denizens were gathered in groups on cliffs and capes, watching the famous clipper sweep past like a lordly swan hastening to its ocean home.

The gulls screamed defiantly as they raced along with the ship, in noisy emulation of her speed. Even the sunshine and the shadows chased her playfully over the water, and the fleecy little clouds above her joined in the

race. A school of brown-backed porpoises came feeding leisurely up the bay; meeting the ship, they wheeled in wild gambol, and raced back by her side until the ship hove to at the Lightship to discharge the pilot.

As the wind breezed up, the face of the pilot began to assume a stern and anxious look, until his mahogany-colored visage glowed like a lobster. He was watching the royals with the utmost care. The eye of the world was upon him, and his doing, or he would have furled the dainty things at once. The ship proved stiff and staunch, yielding so little to the strong wind that she would the more easily snap off her slender "whip-sticks" aloft; an event too humiliating to think of, a dreadful alternative for an old water-dog to contemplate, one who grows timid and fussy as he ages.

The experience of the pilot taught him many cunning tricks of caution. The best seaman in the ship was kept at the wheel, and a glance from the pilot was sufficient cue for Tom Crawford to ease her a spoke or two in the sudden puffs from the land. A cool hand was also put to the royal halyards, ready to let run if the wind came in squalls.

It is indeed dainty work testing the sailing qualities of a new ship. She is as freaky and deceptive as a coquette. One must beware of too great familiarity with either a ship or a woman on first acquaintance. Handle them both gingerly, with cool eye and a steady hand. Give a ship plenty of time to show her mettle, and, like a dainty woman, she will not fail to repay you for your cunning and your caution.

The Fleetwing quivered in every fibre during the strong

puffs, trembling from truck to keel with inward delight as she clove the pea-green waters. When she approached Dumpling Light, the ship was spinning past the headlands ten knots an hour, with but little show of suds where she broke her water forward, or left it astern.

The pilot had cleverly got her gauge, and was now becoming too jubilant to longer keep his joy to himself. While still conning the ship with care, he sauntered aft toward the gentlemen at the stern, when Captain Talbert hailed him: —

"Well, pilot, what do you think of my new ship?"

"Ah, Cap'n Dan, she am a *be'uty!* Never trod the deck of her equal before. I know'd she'd be a whole team in heavy weather; but I'm s'prised to see her race so in a skys'il breeze."

"That's 'bout as I expressed it, Captain Ben. I modelled her for rough sledding; but her buoyancy and speed under these light kites shows we've given her finer lines than we thought."

"Yis, yis, that's the how be it. Twig the saucy jade quicken her footsteps at every word o' praise — like ez a jocky pats the neck o' his racer, to make 'im buckle to the course."

"Here we come to the Dumpling Light! Sheer in close 'longside, Captain Aiken; wife wants to shake hands with her cousin, the lightkeeper."

"Not quite so neighborly ez thet with this ere dainty craft. I'll skin near 'nough fur Mrs. Talbert to toss a bit o' hardtack to the leddy keeper, who's waddlin' down the rock to greet us."

"Steward, lend us a tray of pilot-bread to feed the starving people on Dumpling!"

The cabin boy came just in time for the lady to seize a biscuit, and toss it into the apron of the keeper's wife, as the women gaily exchanged salutations.

As the wind began to cant to the south of west, the ship was headed over toward Hen and Chickens, to secure sufficient weather-gauge to clear the Cuttyhunk lightship. The yards were braced sharp up, and the ship was put on a taut bowline; the jib-sheets were flattened aft, and the spanker set, and, to the surprise of all, the ship was found to carry very little weather-helm.

When they drew out from under the land, heading over toward the Sow and Pigs, the wind freshened more than ever. This induced the ship to show her mettle, and require a taut rein and a steady hand. It needed a few more weather-spokes of the wheel to prevent her luffing in the squalls; and she seemed just a little inclined to take the bit in her teeth — as when a restive courser is held too rudely in check.

The log-reel and sand-glass were now got ready to ascertain her rate of sailing. The "chip" was thrown, and the line run out twelve knots. It was not thought possible; it was deemed a mistake in casting the log. All was made ready again, and with every precaution the pilot and second mate made a careful cast, and found, to the amazement of all, that the actual speed was thirteen and a half knots, owing to a trifling increase of the wind. The pilot's enthusiasm knew no bounds.

"By George! Captain Talbert, I wanter ship 'board

this craft in any capacity, from swab-boy to cook's mate; an' I knows Cap'n Coffin will do likewise — eh?"

"Yis, indeed, Uncle Ben. I'll volunteer to tend tack or sheet fur me daily bread. An' here's the parson. He shall live in the maintop, an' take toll at the cat-harpens, ruther than not go."

It was not so much the speed of thirteen knots which amazed these ancient mariners as the unassuming way in which she did her work. The ship had careened about ten degrees, and there remained fixed, showing her bearings to be low down, and that she was stiff as a tower. A graceful burwave was spurting out from her cutwater, as from the prow of a swift steamer; while her wake was a laughing glitter of sunbeams for more than a mile astern.

The ship was now abreast of the Sow and Pigs lightship. Vineyard Sound lay to the east, broad open to view. The pilot hailed the mate, and made ready to depart.

"Mr. Raymond, drop the r'yals on the caps! Brail up the coursers, an' lay headyards aback! Take in fly-jib, an' flow the jib-sheets." Turning to Captain Talbert, he said: —

"Way's all clear now, cap'n, and I must leave yer. You've got a perfect vessel under yer, an' I'll so report to the builders!" And tears stood in the old man's eyes; for it was a case of love at first sight.

"So do, Captain Aiken. Hilman will be glad to get your report. Now, pilot, and you, gentlemen, step into the cabin, and indulge in a parting glass of champagne."

When all were gathered about the cabin table, Captain Talbert requested Parson B—— to ask a blessing

upon his splendid new enterprise. The parson gladly acquiesced: —

"Certainly, sir. Are we ready?"

"Wait a moment. Boy, ask the mate to step into the cabin. Most of you are aware that it's not etiquette to call in the other officers. It is all a farce calling the mate, who never drinks anything but baby drinks. Here he comes, gentlemen. This is my first officer, Mr. Raymond. We're going to take a parting glass; can you think of something to have with us?"

"I'll see, sir. Steward!"

"Sir?"

"Have you lemonade?"

"Yes, sir; just made some for the ladies."

"Pour me a glass."

"And me another," said the parson, stepping briskly forward, and ranging himself on the side of temperance. "I'll keep you company, my young friend."

All things being ready, Parson B—— offered up a heartfelt prayer for the ship and all on board. Then came the sparkling beverage — the sailors' benediction after prayer — for all but the minister and the mate; for the noble example of the latter had deterred the reverend brother from the tempting glass he had so willingly anticipated.

One by one, in turn, all grasped the hand of the captain and his young mate, and with cheery words tossed off their wine. Bidding adieu to Mrs. Talbert and the lady passenger, who had remained on deck, the shore-party sprang on board the pilot-boat, which was ranged alongside to windward to receive them.

When the visitors had embarked, the headyards were braced forward, and the courses hauled aboard. The jib-sheets were flattened aft, the flying-jib and the three royals hoisted, and the voyage of the Fleetwing was fairly begun.

The ship was kept off a little, all the course would allow, and run clear of Gay Head. The pilot-boat made all sail, endeavoring to keep along with the ship, a few minutes, to observe her appearance from an outside view. But the ship was kept "rap-full," the bowlines slacked up, and the upper yards checked in; she sprang to her task like an antelope, and soon dropped the pilot-boat astern. With shouts and cheers, and a last farewell of waving hats and hands, the defeated boat tacked around, and headed off up the bay.

CHAPTER VI.

THE YOUNG MATE AND THE OLD MARTINET.

FROM the quarter-deck of the Fleetwing her people eagerly watched the receding pilot-boat scudding away up the bay, until a visible touch of sadness crept into every heart. This severed the last link which connected them with the home land; and, as their loneliness dawned upon them, one by one the little group looked mournfully into each other's faces for the needed sympathy.

As with a sigh the mate turned to leave the party and attend to his ship duties, Captain Talbert bade him wait until he called the second mate for an introduction.

Neither of these brave spirits had seen the other until they met on board. When they were presented, and while shaking hands, the two officers quickly took the calibre of each other. They felt like two powerful athletes who were about to meet in the arena and test their skill — their whale-killing power. The words of both officers were frank and fair-spoken, yet there was an interchange of sharp, scrutinizing glances passed between them that clicked like the meeting of two keen rapiers — a mental clash of arms in which there was no love fostered on either side.

Braybrook was a large, square-shouldered man, with keen gray eyes, small and restless, looking savagely out from under shaggy, overhanging brows. The Jewish hookedness of his massive nose made it the most characteristic feature of his face. Thin-cut lips, that implied great firmness, yet having a cynical curl that indicated a savage, brutal courage.

The leathery, tan-colored face of the veteran officer vouched for his being an old stager on the sea, while his sinister expression implied that the milk of human kindness had not been squandered in the make-up of the man. There was the bellow of an angry bull in his voice when giving orders, which was terrible to the ear of a timid seaman. A fierce, ferocious, defiant tone, which had the snarl of a mastiff in it, and jarred even upon the ear of his superiors. This was, perhaps, the most aggressive quality of the man, for while it served to overawe the timid ones it aroused a kindred antagonism in the courageous and self-respecting part of the crew, which could not fail of breeding dissension.

Massive and strongly built as Braybrook was, the greater preponderance of brute strength and animal courage in the second mate was hardly a match for the more sinewy, cool, quick, fearless mate. God grant there may be no personal antagonism between two such men.

During all the evolutions of the morning, while getting under-weigh and making sail, Braybrook had kept too exclusively at his station on the main hatch; though he was watchful and prompt to pass the orders of both the pilot and the mate, yet he purposely held himself aloof from his young superior.

But for Raymond's frank and manly nature — which would win its way anywhere — one might doubt of his power to acquire the full ascendancy over this one brutal man.

As Braybrook had been chief mate on his previous voyage, and was a successful whaleman, he could not now help feeling scornful and dissatisfied with his present position when he found himself subordinate to so young and inexperienced a mate. Captain Talbert had not failed to detect the mutinous drift of Braybrook's feelings, and the mate had already learned to hate the vicious, snarly twang in the voice of his subordinate.

Raymond knew that the second mate had acquired large experience in many previous voyages, and that he was a good disciplinarian and prime whaleman. But he was disgusted to find that he was a coarse, brutal martinet; a quality of discipline which the young officer could not endure. The mate did not know that the arrogant Braybrook had been given extra wages — a mate's lay — and that he was expected by the owners to do most of the whale-killing. And it was well that he did not possess this knowledge at their meeting, else professional jealousy would have sharpened his glances into something all too scornful for endurance.

While Braybrook knew that the mate had always sailed in the same employ, was young, and a pet of the captain's, with but half his own experience, yet, until he now saw him in his official capacity — a large, self-poised, imperious youth — he had never entertained a doubt of his own mental mastery, as well as whaling superiority. Thus was he piqued and angered when confronted eye to eye

with his young superior, having to reluctantly confess that he had certainly met his master in this boy whaleman.

The mental conflict between the two was brief and decisive. It always must be so in the meeting of two brave, ingenuous souls. By some swift mental process of comparison — too ethereal for analysis — when two such spirits meet they must find their level on the instant. No matter what the previously prepared ambush may be — as in Braybrook's case — the conflict is always short, sharp, and decisive.

After a brief talk with his officers, the captain left the ship in charge of the mate, and retired into the cabin to prepare to test his chronometers with the land, from which they must soon take their "departure."

Raymond at once assumed control of the deck, pleasantly ordering Mr. Braybrook to go forward and get the anchors on the bow, and secure them thoroughly for sea service. The chains were also unbent and ranged down in the chain-pens. Scrub-brooms were then called into play, and an hour was spent in cleansing the deck of every vestige of river-mud, their last memento of port.

While this was going on, Raymond sat at his ease, reclining in the quarter-boat, watching the paces of the ship. He amused himself by timing the ship's speed by a bird, a bit of seaweed, a dead crab or other object floating on the water.

When abreast of Vineyard Sound, a broken spar was discovered far out ahead, with a bunch of kelp adhering to it, and on it a couple of gray gulls holding noisy gossip. This dismal looking mile-mark of the sea was a broken topmast that had drifted out from a dismantled wreck on

Devil's Bridge, at the mouth of the Sound, and it gave the mate a fine sea-mark by which to estimate the ship's rate of sailing.

Cuttyhunk and the lightship off the Sow and Pigs had vanished in the distance astern. The striped clay cliffs of Gay Head were becoming dim and indistinct over the quarter. The ship's "departure" was now finally taken from No Man's Land, a small habitable island south of Vineyard.

The ship's course lay to the southeast, and every sail was drawing with a fresh beam-wind. The dull gray sky was in sad keeping with the sea and the great ocean solitude which now spread out before them. The sickly green waters of the coast-soundings were heaving about them, — an ugly, heart-saddening color for the homesick hearts to dwell upon.

Since the ship took "departure" from No Man's Land, the green hills of the Vineyard had been transformed into an ash-gray color. An hour after, the great island was just discerned on the quarter, showing a purple lump, diminishing along the verge of the horizon until lost in a dull slate color. Past the last point of Vineyard, neither Nantucket nor the coast beyond could be seen.

When the land had vanished, the sun was westing fast. The wind was blowing fresh from the southwest in the face of a strong spring-tide which caused a sloppy, wobbling sea. The sickly green waves began to curl into noisy crests, making foam of a ghastly hue, unpleasant to look upon.

In the eye of the wind hung a low bank of nimbus clouds slowly heaving up over the horizon, looking black

as the day of doom, and ominous with a threat of rain. But that appearance was the phenomenal effect of the meeting wind and tide.

Far out ahead, at the southeast, great mountains of hoary-headed cumuli were climbing skyward from out the warm vapor of the Gulf Stream; powerful antagonist to the sluggish rain-clouds in the west.

In the eastern board and at the south, numerous vessels were seen displaying their white sails to the western sun, gleaming with the sheen of snow-drifts on the dark sea; while astern and at the west, the few visible vessels looked like another tribe of aquatics, with their dark, dismal looking sails lying in the shadow, dimly outlined against the black background of nimbus.

A powerful ocean-steamer, foreign-bound, loomed up at the north, with her red stacks just emerging into view, vomiting a dense black smoke, from burning soft bituminous coal, that hung draped like a dingy curtain against the lead-colored sky.

A schooner, evidently a West Indiaman, was in the near foreground, crossing the bow of the Fleetwing. She was running wing-and-wing with all her light kites out, endeavoring to double Nantucket Shoals before dark. As she drew past and displayed her stern, "Boston" was seen painted on her signboard. The white letters were streaked with rust, and her rudder-chains clanked in the swash of the sea, like the shackles of Bonnivard.

The little craft was deep and "logy," wallowing awkwardly through the strong tide-rips and the choppy sea. She had undergone heavy weather, and was making water freely, for her pumps were going with a steady rhythmic

clang that smote upon the ear and conjured up visions of wreck and drowning.

As the ship crossed the wake of the doomed vessel, there rose a sickening smell of a mixture of molasses and palm-oil, products of the tropic isles whence she had come. Before morning she was wrecked on Sconset Head while running for Sankaty Light.

A long, low-running swell began heaving in from the southeast, disturbing the ship's equilibrium a trifle, by making her courtesy too obsequiously to the grim sea-gods.

The rising undulation and the heaped-up cumulus were unpleasant intimations of rough weather and foul wind awaiting the ship. But an angry snarl of the elements must be looked for in passing through the Gulf Stream. It is a greater weather-breeder than Cape Horn or the Stormy Cape. There a dreadful sea-demon watches that no vessel shall pass without displaying her sea-going qualities and the temper of her crew.

CHAPTER VII.

UNCLE JOE DISCLOSING THE MYSTERIES.

DURING the afternoon, the seamen were all kept busily at work upon the chafing-gear. Wherever a brace or other running rope came in contact with the standing rigging, there a wooden scotchman, or woven mats, were put on for protection. Landsmen cannot conceive the amount of oft-recurring labor of this kind on a vessel, especially a new one just from port, required to protect the shrouds and backstays from the fret and chafe of conflicting ropes.

At eight bells, — four o'clock in the afternoon, — all hands were called down from aloft. Marline-spikes, tar-buckets, and spun-yarn, were stowed snugly away in the boson's locker for the night. All hands were then gathered amidships, for the purpose of choosing sea-watches and boats' crews for the four boats. The sea-watches are designated as starboard and larboard watches. The first is also called the captain's; the other, the mate's watch. Usually the second mate heads the captain's, and the third officer the mate's; but in emergencies, both captain and mate head their own watches.

There were thirty-four men on board. The cook, steward, and cabin boy were reckoned as deadheads,

having all day out and all night in. After the crew had been divided into two watches, Captain Talbert and the three superior officers chose their boats' crews.

The captain chose Tahiti John as boat-steerer for the starboard boat. John had been foremost hand with him on two previous voyages, and was a smart, active descendant of Queen Pomare. The fourth mate, Mr. Antoine Joseph, would head the boat when the captain did not go in her.

Nantucket Jim — said to have been born with a harpoon in his hand — was selected as bow-oarsman, a position requiring a cool, fearless fellow, one who would bow on when ordered, even if the flukes of a hundred-barreler were fanning his cheek.

In this connection, Captain Talbert loved to tell of the time when Charlie Raymond — then a mere boy — bowed him on to a fighting sperm whale on the Japan ground. Raymond hauled the boat steadily on through the boarding seas and the hissing foam without flinching a hair, though the boy's hat had been knocked off by the ponderous flukes, and his bow oar was sent spinning fifty feet in the air.

After the perilous tussle was over, during which the "old man" had driven his lance home to the vitals, and brought blood, he ordered the boat slacked astern out of danger, and turned with admiration to the brave boy, saying: —

"Charlie, my lad, you're the stuff to make a whaleman of. Slack away your line; a miss is as good as a mile for your little head any day. You shall have my best hat when we get aboard, to replace yours."

But when the boat had been fairly slacked out of the seething waters, Charlie fainted dead away, and tumbled into the bottom of the boat. Captain Talbert caught him up, and found his left ear badly bruised, and the whole side of his head and shoulder made black and blue by the nearness of the blow from the whale while hauling on. Brainal congestion had taken place; and it was many weeks before the brave boy was wholly rid of the traumatic fever which followed.

From that day Charlie Raymond was elected to the topmost rung of the ladder for heroism, and became endeared to every one on board. Such a reputation, once established, requires a cool head and fearless heart to maintain; for continuous heroism is ever after expected of one. That accidental blow was the prime incentive of his whole after life.

But now that he had been made mate so young, with such a strong team as Braybrook and Uncle Joe Bailey to contend with, it certainly seemed impossible for Raymond to hold his own against men of their large experience. Yet we know that there is an intuitive genius in such fellows, which often impels them to short cuts through old methods, doing things that flash upon us with the glamour of originalities. The sequel alone can tell.

The mate made choice of brave John Hoogley for his boat-steerer. John was a tall, lithe, intelligent-looking Malay, with a piercing black eye, which glittered like an eagle's. He had been harponier on previous voyages, and bore the reputation of never having missed a whale when once within fair dart of his prey. Hoogley was said to be a Brahma priest, who had left his country for unknown

reasons. Be that as it may, Raymond had made choice of him in New Bedford, as one who would fasten to a whale in whatever position of peril the boat might be carried. And it may well be conjectured that the hot-blooded mate had already contemplated many a daring skirmish during the coming voyage. He had done well in choosing a Brahmin, one who believed heroism to be the best passport to the heaven of Brahma.

The mate chose hardy, well knit Americans for his oarsmen. Tom Crawford, the bow-oarsman, was the best man in the ship for any conceivable emergency; brave old Buntline was taken for the midship oar. Both of these men had sailed with Raymond since he first went afloat; and they loved the peril of whisking flukes as well as their young officer. The other two oarsmen were new to whaling business.

It was thought Braybrook had the best boat-steerer. Morey had steered him the voyage before, and ought to have had a third mate's berth; but at Braybrook's request the agent secured Morey by an extra lay and three hundred dollars bonus. The waist boat's crew were all Portuguese, strong, hardy Fayal fishermen, docile to their superiors, and having great endurance upon a long pull. Every man of them was minus a forefinger on the right hand, — a crafty amputation to which the Azore people submit to prevent forced enlistment into the service of the Portuguese king.

The boats' crews were instructed in their special duties by their own boatheaders. The third mate's method of teaching his crew all the nice points to be observed when catching a whale was, perhaps, the most worthy of note,

as Mr. Bailey was not only the best whaleman on board, but the best known whale-killer in the fleet of six hundred vessels.

Uncle Joe Bailey was a cripple. He had encountered the ferocious whale Mocha Dick thirty years before, when his boat was stove, and he was left floating about on the water for dead. Having been picked up after a while, and taken on board for burial, he was found to be alive, but maimed and mangled as few could be and live. Both legs and an arm were broken, and one eye was gone.

Believing he was saved for a purpose by the Divine Providence, the young colored officer ever after was a pious, prayerful man. Since that dreadful day, the one absorbing thought of his life had been to search out and kill the "Demon Whale," who was yearly destroying many other boats, killing or maiming their crews, and occasionally sinking ships by dashing his mighty head against their sides or breaching across their decks, crushing them at a blow.

This white-headed old patriarch was a queer mixture of negro and Gay Head Indian. His father was a Vineyard chief; his black mother, a plantation slave, whom his sailor father had wooed, and subsequently abducted from Mobile, and taken to his Nantucket home. This novel parentage accounted for Uncle Joe's droll negro idiom and quaint Nantucket provincialism.

Joe Bailey was a grave study for the physiognomist, and impressed people differently. The closed port of his larboard eye imparted to the starboard optic a double degree of expression, whether the mood was sad and

solemn, or bubbling over with fun and frolic. A humorous person could not forbear smiling audibly when first confronted with such a long, lank, ungainly body, made doubly awkward by the badly set, angular arm, and the comical limp of his two crooked legs, which in walking dipped and rose like a dancing Jack; something as a crank ship careens, in a squall, then rises with many a jerky lift in the lulls.

Fifty years of seagoing life had shrivelled and furrowed Joe Bailey's tan-colored visage to the hue of leather; this, with his shaggy, overhanging brows, served to impart a look of rough-hewn wisdom to the old man's peaked, angular face. At first sight, one would think that such a decrepit person was more fit for a "snug harbor" at home than poising a lance in a tottling whaleboat at sea. But the closer scrutiny of a more sagacious observer passed a different verdict. There was a keen intelligence and a shining soul-light discovered in the old man's one soft, dark eye and luminous face, together with a hint of latent strength and activity in his free-swinging, brawny arms, which led one not to condemn his usefulness in time of action because of his skeleton frame and ungainly limbs.

Crippled in legs, arm, and eye, the saintly old whaleman ever bore about him a solemn reminder of his rash vow to follow on the track of Mocha till his death. He was commiserated for his deformity, respected for his Christian piety, but above all was he venerated for a marvellous degree of prophetic wisdom about whales, which frequently appalled his superstitious class. Irreligious sailors would often declare Uncle Joe to be in league with Satan, so reliable were his predictions as to the where-

abouts of whales; but Joe Bailey's only incantations were by prayer. It was truly said of the good old man that he often beheld angels in his dreams, and was in frequent communion with the great Unseen during his daily prayers, so that God's loving presence was as familiar to this pious soul as a father's face to his child.

Mr. Bailey proved a valuable acquisition to every ship in which he sailed. His services were secured by a written agreement with the owners that once during the voyage the ship should cruise on the ground of his designation, where his prophetic vision had discovered Mocha Dick. With such a life-purpose, the old seer was always planning new ways to kill a mad whale; for the cunning of the Demon Whale was such that he never attacked a boat twice alike. Many brave whalemen had harpooned the monster, but none could kill him, as their boats would be knocked skyward the next moment, or crushed between his terrible jaws. So great was the dread of this whale that the Mocha Dick cruising-ground was always kept secret from the crew, and sometimes from the officers, who often became panic-stricken. In one instance, an old officer became insane in fear of being killed by the mad whale his ship was cruising for.

Bailey was certainly a most sagacious and observing man, and had acquired great knowledge of the habits of whales and the nature of their most attractive cruising-places. He was the first to teach captains to look for whales near the land on full and change of the moon, — a time when every fish in the sea travels shoreward, — but to seek whales on the quarters of the moon in the swirling eddies along the edges of great ocean currents, where

they may be found making passage from one ground to another.

It was a favorite speculation of Uncle Joe's that most of the large sperm whales hibernated at the bottom of the deep sea during the moon's quarters, where they fed on the juicy flesh of the squid, a monster larger than the whales themselves. The magnetic influence of the full moon, which imparts virility to every living thing, brings the whale up breaching to the surface again, and usually near to the land. These theories are still maintained by the most successful men of the fleet.

Cape de Verde Jose, a tall, raw-boned colored Portuguese, had been shipped to steer the bow boat. He was a bold, surly, unbridled barbarian, and seemed much too turbulent a fellow to be easily managed by an unassuming person like Mr. Bailey, who had not the prestige of a white officer to help create discipline. But the cute old man had his own peculiar tactics, by which he gained perfect mastery over his men.

After the watches and crews had been chosen, Uncle Joe hobbled along to the bow boat, in his distressing, see-saw gait, climbed up into the stern-sheets, and called lustily for his crew: —

"Cum 'long heah, all de white folk an' de pink-starned darkies wot b'long ter de bow boat. Skuf 'long dis way, all yer game chickuns wot wanter larn yer dooty. Clum up heah inter de boat, an' h'ar yer ole farder tek his tex' frum de log-book."

The four oarsmen climbed gleefully up into the boat, and were assigned their thwarts. The surly boat-steerer got upon the rail, and leaned over the boat's bow with a

disdainful look upon his face, implying that he did not require teaching. Taking each in turn, Mr. Bailey taught the men their special duties, as well as the perils of their places.

"Now, chilun, jus' cum ter anchor in yer places, an' h'ar de sarmon 'bout de oars an' de paddles, how ter starn all, an' pull ahead. Tut, tut, no laffin' in meetum time. Open yer tinkin'-box, an' pile in de 'hole lectur'; becase, honeys, when de 'parm whale cum roun' de boat, bite, bite, hungry for boy meat an' cedar, yo' uns wanter starn queak, pull t'ree oar an' back two lively, an' wisey wersy.

"Fur bimeby, whin yer ole mudders cum down ter de wharf, an' ax Uncle Joe, 'Whar's my chilun, ole gent?' sezee, 'All rite, missis.' But dem uns wot dunno de tex', doze yere chiluns wot laff in meetum time, dey won't be dar! An' whin yer ole mudders ax fur yez, wot'll I sez?

"Eh, ah! dis yere cullud pussun wul jus' pint ter heb-ben wid de finger wat Mocha Dick bit off; fur all yez dead chilun wul be gawn ter glory wid dat finger.

"Darfo', honeys, all dem yere brudders ob spect'ble color, wid de niggars hove in, jus yer look at dese yere ole wapple-jawed flippers an' walkers ob mine. Obsarve dat dis ole niggar hab seen sarvice, an' means bizness whin he lectur' de boys."

Turning to little Jack Crow, the steerage boy, who was to pull the stroke oar, the old man continued: —

"Now, yo' leedle white chick wot pulls de arter oar, lemme splain ter yez. Dish am yo' oar. Put yer sit-down yere whar yer b'long. Dish foot-brace am fur de toes whin yo' make de back bend like ar whalebone. Mind,

dearie, wot yer old farder sez whin de big whale am clos' roun'. Doan yer turn yer blue peepers for'ard ter look et nuffin, but mind yer oar."

Addressing the next oarsman, whom he had seated on the tub-thwart, he explained: —

"Hyah, Bill Brown, yuz de tub-oarsman. Mind yo' no flop 'bout wid yer fins an' flukes whin de whale's roun'. Doan yo' stick yer flippers in de coil whin de line go zip, zip, past yer starboard eye. Fur look ah heah, see dis finger wot am step'd out, becuz de leedle niggar Joe dunno no better in dose days."

Eying the surplus avoirdupois of the Dutchman on the next thwart, the one humorous eye of the old man twinkled with fun, as he addressed him: —

"Eh, ah, big Dutchy! Dis ole niggar wud like ter edicate yo' un how ter trim boat. De pint am ter sot still, an' doan yer shift ballast fo' de ole man told yer. Dish yere am de midship oar. Kep yer wedder eye skinned whin de tussle cums, an' doan yer look for'ard sorter skeery 'bout de whale, but jist trim dish. Fur dis ole gent gits dreffle cross sumtime, whin de boys am gawkin' roun', an' doan mind queak."

Stepping forward over the thwarts with the rhythmic motion of a crocodile, the old man addressed his only colored oarsman, a good-natured, ebony-black fellow: —

"Law ar mussy! Talio John, yez gut dreffly tanned las' time ashore. Nuffin but 'parm-a-city frum de whale's head wul bleach yer. Well, Tally, yez brack nuf ter kno' dis yam de bow oar. Dese yere am de bow-cleats, whai yer bow de line ter haul yo' ole farder 'longside de critter ter make de tar cum."

The boat-steerer had slipped away long before Uncle Joe got ready to lecture him. This had the effect to elevate the old man's "ebenezer," and slightly disconcert him at this first breach of discipline.

"Whar's dat yere milk an' molasses niggar? Marvel 'long dish way, yer white-wash'd Portugee! Doan yer go ter tink yo' old farder kant splain ar ting or two ter yez, kaze yo' bin steer ar boat befo' dis v'y'ge. Mussy sakes! Jose Verd, dish yere cullud pussun bin kotch 'parm whales duzzen year fo' yoz born. Darfo,' sah, jist 'member dat Joe Bailey heads dis yere boat — hisself, an' doan want no Portugee niggar ter help 'im! Dis chile gibs de orders, sah, an' spects dem yere orders 'beyed, dubble-queek time.

"Now, dis am de tex' fo' yo', sah; doan yer dart till yo' ole farder teld yer. Doan yer strike de 'parm whale's head, nor de right whale's bilge whin de back holler in; fur de iron won't go dar, honey. Prick off de 'parm whale in de eye, or down in 'is mouf, yo' brack brudder. Prick off de right whale on de tip ob de nose, whar de smellers gro'! An,' Jose, hold yer han' whin yo' go 'n 'longside de sparm whale, an' put de iron in two-thirds frum de hump ter de bunch ob de neck. Dat brings de blood, honey. An,' Jose, put de iron inter de right whale six fut beaft de spout-'ole, jus' ober de shoulder: an' h'ar de peoples holler: 'Dar's blood! Dead whale fur dat niggar!'

"Dar, chilun, dat'll do fur dis time. Ke'p de 'hole sarmun wevolvin' round 'n yer noddle-box, an' Uncle Joe wul make suffin ob yer yit. Now skedaddle whar yer b'long. Go an' fill your bread-locker full ob fried 'ysters an' chic'un pie."

Mr. Bailey's final admonition, for the boys to improve their *menu*, brought down the house. An uproar of laughter burst forth from the group of officers and men who had gathered about the boat unnoticed by the third mate. The other officers, not having gone into details with their men, had soon dismissed their crews, and all quietly grouped beaft the tryworks to listen to Uncle Joe's cute instructions to his surly boat-steerer. When the harangue was finished, the mate called out: —

"Well done, Mr. Bailey; you seem to be putting your boys through a collegiate education."

"Well, sah, it wul all cum in play whin we git down off de 'King Mills,' whar de niggars am born wid dar clos' on, an' whar de 'parm whale hab dreffle sight ob shark 'bout um."

"We must get you to teach our crews some of these whaling mysteries."

"No, Misser Raymon', each ob de chilun mus' larn de ways ob his own boat-header. Odderwise, sah, de 'hole matter wud go starn fust, like de pig in ar hail squall."

CHAPTER VIII.

NIGHT SCENE IN THE CABIN.

AT length the shades of night began to gather down over the great solitude of waters. As daylight faded slowly away, the purple horizon hastened to draw near and nearer unto the ship, until one could almost lay his hand upon the dark sea-rim, which an hour since was miles away.

The ship was not yet in the hands of the night-watch. It was the second dog-watch, and the captain and mate were leisurely pacing up and down the opposite sides of the quarter-deck, laying out the necessary work of the coming day. It would be a busy day for all hands to fit the boats for whaling, and complete the countless chafing-gear of the ship.

A tub of new line must be coiled for each of the four boats, together with a spare line to replace the accidental loss of one. A full complement of harpoons, lances, spades, knives, and boat-hatchets were to be sharpened and fitted for each boat.

New rowlocks must be served and covered with leather or raw-hide, each made to fit its own oar, lest its cheeping noise should disturb the ever-watchful whale. Lantern kegs were to be unheaded by the cooper, stowed with a

boat-lantern, flint and steel, and then be chocked off with sea biscuit — providential food in time of need — and the kegs caulked tightly and slung beneath the stern-sheets of each boat. Every precaution must be taken that the boats should be ready for an encounter with whales, though the rich prey might be delayed for weeks or months.

Weary of his walk in the dog-watch gloom, Captain Talbert bade the mate give Mr. Bailey charge of the deck, and together they would join the ladies in the cabin, before they wrote up the logs for the night.

The upper cabin of the Fleetwing was a half-trunk deck-house, with a front entrance leading from the quarter-deck. There were passageways on each side of the cabin leading aft to the helm and the spanker.

The front cabin was entered through a short vestibule. The mate's stateroom was on the right side of this vesti bule, and the steward's pantry on the left. The main saloon, beyond, was neatly finished with black walnut and maple. The dining-table, on the port side of the saloon, was strongly secured to the deck. A row of cushioned seats surrounded three sides of the table. Above it was a swinging tray, slung from the ceiling, its lower part being used for table implements; while above was a rack, glittering with tumblers and decanters, with a water pitcher in the centre.

The mizzenmast passed down through the after part of the saloon, and was prettily encased in plate mirror on three sides. A mercurial barometer for general use was suspended from the front of the mast, from which the night-watches sought indications for change of weather, and recorded them on the log-slate.

Though surrounded with side windows, the cabin was best lighted by a large skylight overhead, in which a transparent telltale compass hung, convenient for the officer to read on the top of the house, as well as in the cabin. The light from the cabin table served to illuminate the compass-card at night, so that it was still useful to the night-watch on deck.

Staterooms for three of the officers were on the starboard side of the cabin, opposite the dining-table, each room containing two berths. The third and fourth mates had the forward room, and Mr. Braybrook and the cabin boy occupied the after stateroom. The sea-chests of the officers were secured in their rooms, and served as seats.

Entering the after cabin, one was greeted with surprise and pleasure at the elegance and convenience of the ladies' saloon. Mrs. Talbert and Miss Allston, the lady passenger, were sitting on a sofa richly upholstered with crimson plush. This was secured against the after part of the cabin, facing the bureau, medicine-chest, and the two chronometers, all of which were ranged along the opposite side.

In the middle of this charming boudoir stood a large mahogany centre-table, firmly fastened to the deck. Projecting two feet above the centre of this table was a slender steel spindle, to which numerous ingenious sewing implements were attached. The lower contrivance which revolved on the spindle was a lady's work-basket, containing compartments filled with every conceivable nicknack used in needle-work. Above the basket, revolved a beautiful ivory spool-stand, with receptacles for thirty varieties of silks and threads, each spool reeling upon its own

spindle. At the top of all perched a charming red velvet watch-case, made to represent a miniature French clock, wherein Mrs. Talbert's tiny watch showed the time to all.

The spindle upon which all these conveniences were mounted was itself hung on pivots like the gimbals of a compass, heavily weighted at the bottom to keep it upright whatever position of pitch or roll the ship might undergo in stormy weather.

Captain and Mrs. Talbert's berth was on the starboard side of the saloon, hidden behind a heavy portière. This large double bed was also hung on strong iron pintles at each end, meant to be always upright, as a compass. The upper berth was nearly breast-high; beneath this was the child's berth, swinging from the same pintles. Below both of these berths was a long narrow box, containing sufficient ballast to counteract the weight of the three occupants above. Once nestled in this sleeping-receptacle, the occupants were impervious to the toss and tumble of a stormy sea. This ingenious bed, as well as the table and many other conveniences, was the invention of Raymond during the previous voyage.

On the opposite side of the saloon there was a small winding stair leading down to a neat ladies' cabin below-deck, where Miss Allston occupied a berth. This cabin was meant for a retreat during violent storms, should the wind and seas become too noisy in the upper cabin, or perhaps crush in its sides with an unlucky wave. The lower cabin was lighted by two square stern windows, high up over the transom lockers, and furnished good light in fair weather, when it was not necessary to close the wooden dead-lights. A plated swinging lamp, suspended

from the carline nearest the berth, served for evening illumination; lighting up the bureau, wardrobes, sofa, and numerous trunks lashed to the forward bulkhead.

Mrs. Talbert was very fond of Raymond, her husband's favorite young officer, and she at once replied with good-natured repartee to one of the mate's jocular remarks as he entered the cabin: —

"Well, Charles, I saw the white flag from the housetop this morning. I suppose that means 'All's well that ends well'?"

"Very likely it does. But it was a sad time for one of us, I know. It was all wrong for me to have waited till the last moment for a final understanding with Mary Tudor."

"Of course it was, you goose. Why did you delay so long?"

"All owing to the captain's giving me wrong sailing orders when we laid out the dreadful courting campaign."

"Oh, you rogue," she said to the captain; "you have been meddling with this delicate matter, have you?"

"Well, yes. I just lent a hand to shape course and distance, when Raymond took his love tacks aboard," replied the captain, grinning.

"Why, Daniel! didn't you know that *I* was managing that matter?" with a mock-demure look on her face, to express her pique and disappointment.

"Yes, I knew you had slipped the boy's fasts, and set him afloat in a free wind and a fair tide; running the poor fellow off dead afore it, with square yards, and not a single fathom of ground-tackle aboard to bring to anchor with, in case of a squall."

"What of it, you naughty man? Didn't you think I could teach him best how a pretty damsel should be courted?"

"P'raps so. But then it's all wrong for a young chap to go sailing with a flowing sheet after that fashion. He's sure to forget his soundings, and risk getting aground, when trying to board one of those shore-craft too soon. You'll admit, Annie, I'm the better sailor of the two, and I tell you it's best to try a new gal 'full-an by,' 'reaching and beating,' as well as running 'fore it; to l'arn all her nice p'ints of sailing, 'fore you pop. That's the kind of tactics I tried on you, and it worked fust rate." And the old skipper laughed heartily at the wry faces his better half was making.

"But don't you see that you have broken up a nice wedding by your meddling, my dear? Perhaps, now, Raymond will lose her before we return. Then you'll feel bad, for you wished him to be married."

"Ah, there's where the proof of the pudding comes in, my lady. If a gal misstays, and plumps into another consort the first time she's tested, then abandon the craft, say I. It's the weatherly qualities of the heart, the seagoing condition of the shore-critters, that a sailor wants to test 'fore he splices."

"How can you talk so about such a bewitching creature as Mary Tudor?"

"Beauty ain't but skin-deep, anyway; and her pretty ways are only fine weather qualities. I tell Raymond to select a gal for her weatherly p'ints of sailing, as I did. There's many a lee-shore to encounter in the lives of us all, and it's only the seagoing qualities of a gal that will help

her to hold her luff in the ground-swells and lee-tides of life. Charlie Raymond don't want a painted dingy to tow at his stern, in fair weather or foul; what he requires is a staunch, weatherly, free-going craft, that will keep tack and tack with him through all the voyage of life."

"Raymond isn't wholly of your mind about Mary, I know; and you sha'n't talk so about her." Turning to the mate, Mrs. Talbert continued, "I did not see Mamie this morning, as I hoped to; so you must promise to tell me all about the engagement."

"Perhaps so," said the blushing officer, "when we deepen the water a little more. Blue water and no soundings is the only proper place to haul a sailor into the confessional."

"Well, my boy," said the kind-hearted old skipper, coming to the mate's relief, "go and write up your log-book for the day, and turn in. You've had a busy day, and look tired."

"Not so much the busy day, I guess," added Mrs. Talbert, with a roguish leer at the abashed young officer, "as last night's late hour of billing and cooing."

"Tut, tut, my love; mebby you and I did all that sort of thing in our day," said the fond captain to his pretty young wife.

"Now, Daniel, don't talk nonsense before the company, for Mr. Raymond says the water isn't blue enough yet to tell all you know."

After their gay laughter had subsided at this jolly retort, Raymond bade Miss Allston and the others good-night, and retired to write up his log.

"Oh, isn't he nice!" exclaimed the vivacious lady

passenger in an animated tone, the moment the mate disappeared. "I do hope his girl knows how to prize him."

"She'll prize him, no doubt, all she is capable of doing. But she isn't a girl of much resolution. Yet I think she'll be true to him, if her dreadful worldly-wise mother don't compel her to receive attention from other gentlemen, hoping to accomplish a more speedy marriage. That's Mrs. Tudor's usual way of doing. Having four other daughters, the scheming mother will hustle the whole five of them into premature wedlock, in the same hasty way that she did the three older ones."

"How dreadful to think of! Mr. Raymond deserves a better fate than seems in store for him from that quarter."

While the captain sat at his desk writing his journal and recording the true "departure" of the ship, Mrs. Talbert went below with the girl to instruct her how to manage her berth, and initiate her in numerous other new quirks of sea-life. As the ship was careened to port, Miss Allston was taught to give her mattress a larboard hoist over against the lee berth-board, making the bed as nearly on an even-keel as the low-berth-board would permit. If the wind should shift during the night, she was told to hop up and tack ship with her bed; thus learning to counteract all the sudden sea-changes of the hour.

Miss Allston belonged in Lowell, and in early life had been brought up in affluence. Her father had been dead two years. The estate was greatly involved in debt, leaving the family in poor circumstances; this induced

Asenith, the youngest of three daughters, to take passage to Honolulu, where she was going to meet an old lover and former schoolmate by the name of Richards, to whom she was to be married.

Raymond had known Miss Allston in his schoolboy days, and had been yachting with her and her father at Lowell Island. After an interval of years the acquaintance had been renewed during the week they were staying at Captain Talbert's house, in New Bedford, where her mother was visiting, in company with Raymond's mother, previous to sailing.

CHAPTER IX.

TOM THRASHING THE PORTUGUESE.

QUITE a different scene was to be found in the forecastle of the Fleetwing during the evening hours. Entering through the companionway, and descending by the steep, narrow steps into the bedlam of noise below, a large, roomy forecastle was indistinctly seen through clouds of tobacco-smoke, and the darkness made visible by two hanging lamps suspended from the great beams overhead.

Even by daylight the forecastle was an ill-lighted place. The four ground-glass lights inserted in the deck, together with the open scuttle of the gangway, proved insufficient to dispel the gloom of the place. The constant dash of spray on the bows forbade the use of bulls-eyes in the side, like those on the quarters of the ship.

With such twilight gloom ever pervading the family domain of the sailors, one or more of the quaint tin lamps, shaped like double-nosed coffee-pots, were kept burning night and day. From these dimly-flickering lamps Jack's oft-recurring pipes were lighted, an occupation diligently followed by all the sailors during their hours of leisure.

During the two dog-watches of this first day out, the older sailors were seen busily lashing their chests to the

deck floor and the berths, to prevent their capsizing in a heavy seaway. The first sailors to come aboard placed their chests near to their berths, which permitted them to lash the chest-beckets through holes made for the purpose in the lower bunk-boards. This first row of chests circled the whole forecastle. The beckets of the second tier were secured to strong staples driven into the lower deck.

This orderly arrangement of Jack's furniture is a work of importance, which some experienced seaman generally takes upon himself to look after. If a chest breaks adrift in a gale, it not only tumbles the occupant to leeward with the loss of the meal he may chance to be eating, but with the more considerable risk of breaking his neck.

The green hands were seen sandwiched in among the seamen, eagerly watching their doings, and drinking in every briny phrase let fall from the lips of the old salts, deemed by the youngsters as the most essential elements of their nautical education.

Woe to the forecastle that has no leading spirit strong enough to rule over its chaotic broils. In such a case, it requires a dozen or more fighting bouts to determine who shall be "cock of the roost," the "biggest toad in the puddle."

It often requires weeks, more or less, to fairly assimilate such a motley crew as the Fleetwing's. But eventualities of wind or weather will arise, giving occasion for winnowing the chaff from the wheat, when the better element among them comes bounding to the surface of the seething mass, and asserts the leadership by unmistakable tokens, and holds despotic sway throughout the voyage.

The Portuguese element in the Fleetwing was such as is usually found in the forecastles of most whalers. It is a problem which requires the most judicious handling at the very outset of the voyage. They are a race of strong, robust sailors, though quick-tempered, and ever ready to use the knife upon small provocation.

If men of such uncurbed elements acquire the ascendency in a ship's forecastle, they become the veriest tyrants. Many of these Azores men are minus the forefinger of the right hand — their method of dodging enlistment — and if they come to rule, others must obey, under the penalty of a knife-stab, or at least be deprived of a finger, that the American shall no longer call the Portuguese "four-fingered Jack."

The first display of a deadly weapon took place at an early hour of the dog-watch. Most of the crew had finished their supper, and were then lying in their berths, or lolling around on the chests, puffing away at their pipes. On the starboard side of the forecastle sat a merry group of American seamen, smoking and yarning. Huge Tom Crawford, the veteran of the starboard watch, was leaning against the bowsprit bitts, where they reached down through the forecastle, puffing away at his stubby pipe, and telling a humorous story of his brief shore-life, between the whiffs of smoke. The youngsters were gathered about the good-natured sailor, listening intently to every word which fell from his lips. One bright-eyed lad sat snuggled up to old Tom, whose ponderous arm — big as the boy's leg — lay lovingly about the youth, whom he had adopted as his bunk-mate. The youngsters soon acquire veneration for such a jolly old tar, and delight to run at his beck and call.

Over on the larboard side of the forecastle, a cluster of six Portuguese sat about in a circle, playing cards, gambling for tobacco, and were very intent upon their game. Several of these black-bearded foreigners were boisterous and quarrelsome, evidently a little the worse for liquor; for occasionally they swore vigorously at one another, in their own musical tongue. Big Antonio seemed to be the noisy arbitrator among them. Yet, with all this hubbub among the Portuguese, one would get the general impression of a good-natured jollity pervading the scene.

Suddenly the large black-bearded Antonio snapped up a saucy-spoken green hand, who had insinuated, upon seeing a Jack turned up, that the whole group of card-players were "four-fingered Jacks." This, though true, was an imprudent speech to make in the hearing of such men, when a little groggy. The boy retorted to the savage oath of the Portuguese, who instantly drew a glittering dirk knife, and made a fierce lunge at the breast of the youth, which nearly proved fatal, having slashed the boy's clothes, and pierced his arm.

In an instant the forecastle was a scene of wild uproar. Revengeful threats were bandied back and forth, sounding ominous in the smoky gloom which pervaded the scene. Old Tom sprang up with the alacrity of youth, when he comprehended what had happened; stalked quickly across the forecastle, and, without a word of preliminary rebuke, let fly one of his great topmauls at the head of the burly assailant, who stood brandishing his weapon, vowing vengance upon all Yankees.

The huge Portuguese went down like a felled ox at the

shambles, falling across the chests, still littered with playing-cards, where he lay insensible, as if dead. An instant hush fell upon the tumultuous scene; all eyes bent upon Tom, awaiting the next act.

"Pick up thet ere sticker, an' pass it over 'ere," said the royal fellow, as he reached out his ponderous hand for the dirk.

"It b'longs ter Antonio, an' yer sha'n't 'av it," replied one of the quarrelsome card-players, as he picked up the knife and brandished it with a threatening air.

Tom's long arm suddenly left his side again, projected over a-port, like an animated catapult; and a second person of the Portuguese nationality lay doubled up across the first one. Crawford caught up the dirk and passed it to his young bunk-mate, with a peremptory order to go on deck and throw it overboard.

Whereupon the other foreigners drew their sheath-knives and stood on the defensive; which elicited a brief moral discourse from Tom, before proceeding to further action, for he had been the Demosthenes of many a forecastle in the past score of years.

"Look ar 'ere, you uns! I've a blow fur every durned 'Guee who draws blade on ar shipmate o' mine. Now mark thet, an' bide ther licks thet foller."

This speech induced the four banded ruffians to urge each other on to — "Giv' et 'im, 'tween ther ribs!" They were four good sized men, armed against one who innocently sought to do battle with a pair of fists the size of a garden squash. These villains began to hedge around Tom as if to assail him on both flanks at once. At this stage of affairs, brave old Buntline and nimble

Nantucket Jim pushed forward to the front to join sides with Tom. But with an eloquent look of heroism lighting up his blue eyes, noble old Tom bade his willing shipmates to: —

"Go sot down, Ben! An' all you uns what 'ave any 'spect fur yer ole shipmate. Lemme boss thes 'ere job, ez I'm goin' ter keep order fur ther rest uv ther voy'ge."

It took Tom less than four minutes to add four other insensible Portuguese to his previous underpining of two; making six burly ruffians heaped up together, breathless as dead men.

Walking quietly back to his chest, Tom took his seat, and resumed his pipe; sending some of the men on deck to call down the other four Portuguese in the larboard watch, to come and take their shipmates up into the air and dress their wounds.

Henceforth quiet old Tom Crawford was the ruling mind in the Fleetwing's forecastle, and his sway was acknowledged in the most conclusive logic known on shipboard.

Each of the old seamen usually made choice of a young sailor from the other watch to occupy his berth during his deck-watch. In this way the old shellbacks mated with the youngsters, protecting them against the Portuguese, in exchange for the boys' running promptly at their beck and call.

However daintily a seagoing youngster may have been nurtured at home, he must now be taught to drink, smoke, and swear in true nautical phrases; which is Jack's chief process of concocting a sailor-man.

The young chummy must run to the galley to fetch the

lobscouse and pot of coffee for his venerable instructor, in payment for being taught to make a bowline and to tuck a Mathew Walker. Jack is logical, and means to do nothing for a greenhorn without adequate equivalent. The old salt is a vast vocabulary of sea-terms, and the youngster is a crude sponge bent upon absorbing all the briny things which fall from Jack's lips.

A truly noble sailor is loved and venerated by his shipmates. Even the blustering, swaggering sea-lawyer, like English Bill, shows respect to such a leader, and dares not air his mutinous talk before such a marine nobleman. One such seaman in the forecastle is an invaluable safeguard to a ship. Tom Crawford, Ben Buntline, and Nantucket Jim were such men, and the Fleetwing's little oligarchy below-stairs stand in no danger of either Goth or Vandal invading their domain.

CHAPTER X.

THE SHIP CAUGHT IN A GALE.

WHEN Braybrook came out to take charge of the first night-watch, every sail was set from deck to truck; all drawing with tautened leeches and arching footropes. The bowlines were eased away, and the weather-braces checked in, just enough to take a little list out of the steep incline of the deck; though even now, whenever the ship sprung her luff a trifle too much, and bumped into the southern swell, the water would swash in at the lee scuppers, gurgling like a sink spout in finding its way out.

The heavy head-swell had steadily increased during the dog-watch, and now the forward plunge of the sharp bow was becoming too much for the 'longshore stomachs of the green hands. Several of these worthies, more benevolent than their fellows, were already hobnobbing with Davy Jones, gratuitously feeding his fishes with the half-digested slops from their own bread-lockers.

Even the ladies in the cabin had again taken to the same charitable doings, at the instigation of Neptune, breaking the stowage of the steward's more delectable dainties with no better grace than the new forecastle sailors. The man at the helm was grinning from ear to

ear at the musical grunts and groans which came to him, scented with camphor and cologne, through the after cabin windows.

To a genuine old shellback, the first lunge of the ship to a deep-sea roll, tickles his fancy and renews his affection for the sea. The reeling deck awakens the long-forgotten instinct of his crooked sea-legs the instant he is afloat. Tender as the embrace of lovers is the meeting of Sailor-Jack and the Sea, after a long absence, and bluff and hearty is the greeting each gives the other. Well he knows the great contempt old Ocean has for the spewing spoonies who toss their lobscouse about on the blue sheen, when playful winds and dancing waves are doing their best to enliven the beauty of the sea.

To a callow sailor, when first set afloat on a laboring sea, the uneven deck seems intent upon rising up to meet his unsteady feet, at every backward pitch and windward roll of the ship. Even the far horizon will not keep down in its place, but is ever threatening to hop up and bump the head of the deluded novice, whether he reels forward or staggers aft in his theatrical perambulation of the deck. If the greenhorn ventures to look away from the dreadful sea, the towering foremast comes pitching backward toward him, as if it would certainly tumble upon his doomed head. At this stage of the farce, brainal anæmia sets in — the true source of *mal de mer*. Following this dizzy premonition, the blood recedes from the surface, and the heart becomes engorged; then the stomach begins to raise Cain — rolling and tumbling, spitting and spewing, endeavoring to pattern after the wallowing seas.

When Captain Talbert was about to turn in for the

night, he noticed that his aneroid was falling, indicating bad weather. With an anxious look upon his face, he stepped out into the main cabin to consult the mercurial barometer, half hoping that instrument would confute this sudden threat of a storm. The mercury was found nearly on a level with the gauge, yet the glittering column was deeply indented, having a cup-shaped top — a sure forerunner of a quick fall.

Advising both of the ladies to retire at once and prepare for the worst, the captain went out on deck for an hour's walk with Braybrook, intent upon watching the weather. With a new ship, her rigging not yet fully stretched, and the running-gear full of kinks, with the new hands not accustomed to their work, and the greenhorns babying with sea-sickness and whimpering with apprehension, the prospect of dealing with a gale was not pleasant to contemplate.

It was ten o'clock when the captain left the cabin and groped his way out into the gloom, — for the night had shut down dark as Egypt. The wind was slowly dying out, yet it still held fair from the southwest. The pitch and roll of the ship was increasing every minute with the growing southeast swell. The sails began to thump and thunder against the masts, until the whole fabric shook from truck to keel. The rudder thrashed and groaned like a resurrected ghost, until the new tiller-ropes became slacked, taxing the strength of the helmsman lest he should be flung over the wheel.

For half an hour the two officers walked the gloomy quarter-deck, unable to see each other in the blackness, speculating in ghostly voices upon the probable direction

of the coming storm, in which time the barometer was found to have fallen an inch. The air had now become close and oppressive — a negative condition preluding great atmospheric disturbance. Looking aloft, nothing could be distinguished half way up to the tops. The sea was like ink, except where the great lumping swell floundered against the broadside and set the water aflame with phosphorescence — a weird mockery of light, which does not illuminate an inch beyond your nose.

Sober and anxious, the captain and Braybrook kept up their walk, both awed by the terrible suspense impending over the ship. The voices of the thoughtless, hilarious men on the forecastle sounded strange and out of place in such an hour. When it was known among the crew that the barometer was low, and falling fast, the news served to stop their jubulous whistling and singing; the oldest seamen instantly caught the ominous threatening of the rising undulation, and the blinding darkness of the night.

After again inspecting the two barometers, Captain Talbert came out and spoke in low tones to the second mate, evidently expressing his increased anxiety about the weather. He went aft and looked at the compass, and listened closely to the snarling, spiteful swash of the great swells; which, windless as it was, humped themselves up almost like wind-driven billows, and came so near to breaking into crests that they made a gurgling, suppressed noise, like the choking of a score of drowning men. This determined the captain to act at once, and he gave his orders in a loud voice: —

"Brail up the foresail and mainsail! Snug them up close to the yards."

"Ay, ay, sir!" came in quick response from Braybrook, and he in turn bellowed to the men:—

"For'ard there! gather aft and brail up the mainsail. Man clew-garnets and buntlines. Let go tack and sheet."

Dark as it was, there was a sufficient leaven of sea-going men among the watch to find the ropes readily, and in five minutes the great sail hung in the brails.

"Belay all the main rigging. Lay for'ard, and up with the foresail."

"Ay, ay, sir," answered Nantucket Jim, the worthy spokesman of the starboard watch, who led the chorus in the hoisting, took the highest hand-grip on the halyards, clewlines, or reef-tackles.

When the foresail was snugged, Braybrook so reported to the captain, and received his further orders:—

"Haul down jib and flying jib. Clew up royals and to'gans'ils, and furl them. Work lively, every man of you."

"Ay, ay, sir," replied Braybrook. "Mr. Antoine, keep a few hands for'ard, and down jibs, and clew up the r'yal and gansail. Aft here, the rest of the watch. Let go r'yal halyard and sheets, and clew up. Well! To'gans'il halyard, and sheets let run, and man the rigging. Belay! Up aloft, 'Tucket an' English Bill, an' take with you two greenies, an' furl the sails. Aft here, the rest of yer, to the mizzen rigging, an' clew up r'yal an' 'gans'il."

A half hour's labor was expended, and the light sails aloft were all furled, and the jibs stowed. That done, the fore and main hatches were bared down, and the tarpaulins put snugly on, making ready for the deck to be submerged. When the watch was all down from aloft, the

men were stationed at the three topsails; the halyards were coiled carefully on deck, ready to be let go by the run.

With the exception of the abrupt fall of the mercury, the ugly swell rolling in from the southeast gave the only indicated direction of the coming gale. Even that might be only the after-swell of a furious cyclone, a thousand miles away, which had long since blown itself out. On the contrary, it was the joint belief of the most weather-wise on board that a terrific gale was brewing in the southeast, and the swell was deemed a true forerunner of what was coming.

The suspense increased with every moment's delay of the wind. The rudder continued to thrash as if it would be torn from its pintles; and a second time the slack wheel-ropes had to be tautened. The wind had fallen to a flat calm. The ship fell off into the deep trough of the seas, rolling frightfully, bringing up with a heavy lurch, whenever she reached her bearing. The dread uncertainty and oppression hung like a pall over every one. Something dreadful was surely impending; and a frightful danger was evidently very near at hand. All felt as if they could not be kept much longer in suspense.

As an outlet to his growing apprehensions, Captain Talbert now gave an order to furl the mainsail and brail up the spanker, as the latter was a dangerous sail to be caught with, though much needed in a rolling sea. That done, the mizzentopsail was close-reefed, hoisted, and braced sharp up. Nothing now remained on the ship but the two broad topsails, canvas which must be kept set at all hazard, to prevent the vessel from straining her masts by rolling.

All hands were now hurriedly called, for it was evident to all that the crisis was at hand, though but few could tell upon what they grounded their belief. But it was a time when the mental part of man seemed suspended in the air, nerved up like a bird with wings extended, ready for flight.

The second mate's watch was concentrated at the main-topsail halyards, reef-tackles, and clewlines, under Braybrook's own eye. Fast as the larboard watch came up, they were stationed at the foretopsail rigging, by the mate, who took his position near the man at the halyards, to make sure they were let run the instant the word was given. Captain Talbert took his station at the binnacle, where he could overlook the helm, which had a strong man and a lusty boy tugging at the jerking wheel.

Mrs. Talbert had a window open at the head of her berth, where she could receive a needed word of assurance from the captain, for the oppressive atmosphere had struck inboard as well as out. Miss Allston would occasionally call up from the depths of the lower cabin to her companion in the upper, to know what awful thing was going to happen. Again she called with urgent voice, asking what that dreadful thing was pounding beneath her berth, as if it would break in the ship's bottom. When told that it was the rudder, she felt ashamed of her idle fears, and did not further inquire what made the partitions groan and the carlines creak, like cart-wheels that needed greasing.

For half an hour all hands were thus kept at stations watching for what had not yet come. One by one the crew let go the ropes and crouched in a drowsy heap

under the bulwarks, and were soon sleeping, oblivious of the threatened danger.

At length the sharp ear of the mate caught a low moaning sound far away in the southeast, which he reported to the captain. For a while no one else could hear it, and precious time was lost. Soon after, a low rumble became audible to every ear, which quickly increased to a sullen roar, followed by a terrific squall, which struck the ship abeam, bursting with an overwhelming force of wind and waves, crushing the vessel down upon her broadside in an instant.

Though the topsail halyards were let go promptly on the order, even before the gale struck, yet by chance the ship was careened over by a low lee-lurch, at the time, and the iron parrels jammed on the masts, and the yards would not come down to the caps. Thirty men were put on to reef-tackles and clewlines, tugging away like mad men, but there hung the yards, cockbilled by the wind, at the risk of losing the spars and the sails.

The helm was put up and the mizzentopsail squared in, endeavoring to run the ship off before the wind. She would only pay off about four points, take the bit in her teeth, and rush madly back into the wind again; burying her lee-bow under the monstrous seas half-way to the mainmast, until the men to leeward had to spring into the rigging and climb above the fair-leaders for security.

The situation was full of peril, and required good seamanship to extricate the ship. The sails were new and strong, but the yards could not long stand such strain. More head-sail must be set, or the ship would not pay off. Order was passed to the mate to set the foresail; first try-

ing a lee clew; and if that would not do, then set the whole sail.

The foresheet was manned, the clew-garnet and lee buntlines eased carefully away, and at length a goose-winged foresail was set. Again the helm was put hard up, and, after a moment's irresolution, the ship payed off before the wind, the yards were got down on the lifts, and the reef-tackles were hauled up two blocks.

The men were then ordered aloft, a full watch upon each yard, and, as a lull came just then in the gale, the ship was brought to the wind without shipping a sea. Before the hands were fairly upon the yards, the gale piped on again, listing the ship over until the lee rail lay level with the frothy sea. It was a test of true courage for the seamen, while the poor green hands had sufficient reason to be appalled by what appeared certain destruction awaiting them.

In the bright, brief glares of lightning which lit up the ship, the black figures of men could be seen clinging to the white yards with the grip of death. The thrashing canvas ballooned out high above the men for a moment, and then beat down upon the yards with a thundering crash, endangering the heads of the watch at every blow.

During the squalls the men could only cling for their lives, waiting for another lull in the gale. The boat-steerers at the lee earings, sitting astride of the yards, and the reefers on the lee yard-arms were in positions full of peril; and nothing but the top-lifts prevented the former from being hurled from the yard-end into the sea, with every leeward slat of the sail.

When the squall again abated, quick work was made by

the men on both yards. The first two reefs were made in one. Then a close reef was taken, earings hauled taut and reef-points knotted, the best that time would permit in the howling gale. Gladly the overtaxed men crept in from the yards, and worked their way slowly down the dark rigging, jammed hard against the shrouds by the renewed force of the wind.

When all were on deck, the halyards were tautened, and the yards braced up. The goose-wing of the foresail was taken in, the whole sail furled, and the ship made snug fore and aft for any emergency.

All of the first and an hour of the middle watch had gone by when the hard tussle of the reefing was over. Mr. Bailey took charge of the middle watch, while Braybrook and his water-soaked men went below to change their clothes, and snatch a brief sleep from the three remaining hours of their watch below.

CHAPTER XI.

THE TERRIFIED AND SEA-SICK LADIES.

WHEN the Fleetwing had been made snug alow and aloft, and it was found the noble vessel weathered the gale easily, Captain Talbert put the ship in charge of Mr. Bailey, and retired to the cabin, to look after the little family within. Mrs. Talbert was found desperately sea-sick, and had been badly frightened at one time in fear the ship was going to pieces, judging from the fearful hubbub without. Having been compelled to close her window when the gale struck, the lady was shut off from all means of communication with her husband, while his long delay on deck alarmed her lest something very serious had happened.

Miss Allston had suffered far more from sea-sickness and fright than Mrs. Talbert. Imprisoned in the loneliness of the lower cabin, where her fears were augmented by the surrounding gloom, the young girl had received a severe mental shock in addition to her sea-sickness. When the gale struck the ship, a deluge of sea-water burst in at the lee stern window — the dead-light not being closed — and dashed with terrible force across the transom, down which it poured in a cataract, leading the already alarmed girl to believe the ship was sinking, and that all on board would be drowned.

Occupying a rather elevated weather berth, whose berth-board was much too low for a storm, Miss Allston had barely escaped being flung headlong out at the first dreadful lee-lurch of the stricken ship. Such a fall would have plunged her waist-deep into the water then swashing about in the lee-scuppers. This fright, occurring amidst the unearthly noise of creaking timbers, groaning bulk-heads, howling wind, and roaring seas, made the dismal place seem a very pandemonium created to madden her brain.

In this dazed state of mind Miss Allston lay two long hours before help came, watching the hideous black shadows made by the swinging lamp, whose flame flickered just enough to people the gloom with moving terrors. When the ship was recovering from a frightful forward pitch, or a low-down leeward lurch, then the wind-blown lamp would swing quickly back toward the berth, disclosing to the frenzied girl numerous half-defined monsters creeping out from dark crannies, threatening her by menacing gestures as they stealthily approached the berth, until the horrified girl would cover her face to smother her cries, and lie trembling with fright, possessed with the belief that she was to be seized by the black demons, and flung into the sea.

As Captain Talbert could not leave his wife to go to the assistance of the lady passenger, it fell to the mate — his wet clothes having been changed — to attend the sick girl below. Raymond had officiated as the ship's doctor on the previous voyage, being gifted with a natural love for medical lore. He had further greatly perfected himself during the past three months at home, where he had

not only attended a full course of medical lectures, but had also applied himself diligently to private instruction, posting on Materia Medica — with a view to specific medication — under the guidance of a prominent city physician of the reformed practice.

There was now an urgent call both for prescriptions and medical attendance upon the two sick ladies, and the young medico was not long in showing that he was equal to the emergency. After administering a cerebro-spinal remedy to Mrs. Talbert, whose lower brain was yet the principal seat of trouble, and having advised hand-friction to the spine, followed by a supine position, with the head low — to overcome the brainal anæmia — Raymond left his first patient in charge of the captain, with the positive assurance that she would be all right and asleep within an hour.

Hastening below to Miss Allston, who had already been left too long to herself, he found the sick girl in such condition that she could not have long survived without relief. Her stomach had been greatly strained by retching and vomiting, so that an emesis of blood was induced, which frightened her, coming as an accessory to other surrounding horrors.

When Raymond approached the berth of the half-dead girl, she lay cowering with terror; her head hidden from view, half smothered beneath the clothes. She was doubled up with severe pleurisy pain, probably caused by retching, and had a high fever, the effect of her all-pervading fear of death. Every drop of the wretched girl's blood had receded from the surface, engorging the heart almost to suffocation, leaving her deathly pale, as seen in

the dim light, and quaking audibly with the deadly ague of fright.

Horrified at the sad condition in which he found the young creature, Raymond endeavored in vain to break the frenzied clutch of her one hand from the berth-board, and of the other from the bedclothes, held fast over her half-stifled head. Not until he spoke to her, in the tenderest tones, and told her who he was, and for what purpose he had come to her, would the terror-stricken girl disclose her face. Clutching fast to Raymond's hand for protection as she glanced furtively about her, Miss Allston looked gratefully up into the mate's eyes as he bent over her, bursting into hysterical sobs and tears when assured of safety.

Well might her young heart gladden when she saw Raymond's cheery face bending tenderly over her berth. The sympathetic tones of his voice acquired a charm to her in that moment which the girl would never forget. Besides, it is a well known fact that an intelligent sailor has the rare faculty of making a woman feel instantly at her ease in his presence; so much at home with herself in his company that she forgets her natural feminine constraint before men. This psychologic quality of a noble mariner begets implicit confidence with the gentle sex, and easily leads to mutual admiration, if not to lasting endearment.

In his province of physician, Raymond was quick to perceive the imperative call for aconite in each and all of the indicated symptoms of the almost death-stricken girl. He administered a few minute doses of this powerful herbal medicament, which together with his own re-assuring presence, soon showed a beneficial effect.

It allayed the fever and the unquenchable thirst; subdued the pleurisy without the aid of bryonia, the usual specific; quieted her apprehension, and gradually restored her to an almost normal circulation again. Her sea-sickness, which was at first increased by a moderate fright, was at length wholly subdued by the mental shock of real terror.

So completely dazed was the young girl before Raymond appeared, that every sight and sound about her took on some supernatural aspect. But when her rescuer came to officiate as the good Samaritan, pressing her aching temples with his magnetic fingers, chafing her ice-cold hands, and soothing away her fears by his sympathetic tones, the whole train of terrifying evils were exorcised as by magic.

The girl believed every word which Raymond said to her, when he felt it necessary to declare that all danger to the ship had passed; and that she must put away her fears, trust to his medical skill, and suffer him to soothe her to sleep, as the only anodyne which could alleviate her aching heart and disordered brain. All these appeals were appreciated by the half-crazed girl, and they fell on her ear like a mother's lullaby when wooing her sick child to slumber.

Finding she was growing drowsy in spite of herself, Miss Allston would renew her effort to keep awake; appalled at the thought of again being left alone with the hideous noises made by the laboring ship, and in the midst of darkness so peopled with stalking shadows.

Clinging with desperation to Raymond's free hand, so that he could not steal away from her should she drop to

sleep, at the end of two hour's tussle with her lingering terrors, the sick girl quieted into a tranquil state and slept soundly, oblivious of all the wild uproar of the gale.

The aconite had acted beautifully, and proved the best hypnotic she could have had. In fact it is an incontrovertible axiom in medication that the truly indicated remedy in acute diseases, of whatever name or nature, is the best possible soporific for the sick.

For another long hour Raymond clung to the berth mid the tossing of the storm, watching tenderly over the sleeping girl, who was often startled from her deepest slumber by the noisy jerks of the wheel-rope, whenever an ugly sea came, lunged down under the counter, and whanged away at the rudder, like some infuriated monster.

To sleep the first night at sea is usually a difficult matter. Somnolence is then crowded so full of nightmare visions and unearthly noises, that even a sailor cannot always accomplish the task. Thus the passive rest of this gently nurtured girl was remarkable, considering that she had undergone the awful crash of the storm-lashed ship lurching to her beam-ends; the deluge pouring in at her chamber window, imparting the dreadful delusion of a sinking ship; horrors enough to disconcert the bravest.

When eight bells struck, Raymond quietly disengaged his hand from the clasp of the sleeping girl, and stole up into the cabin to see what was needed there. Finding Mrs. Talbert sleeping soundly, he went out on the storm-tossed deck to exchange a word with Uncle Joe, whose men were gathered about him under the hurricane-house, having one by one been below to change their wet garments.

The ship was making good weather of the gale, though the seas ran high and the wind blew hard. Toward the last of the watch the gale had gradually worked around to the south, blowing harder than ever for a while; coming in sharp, shrieking hail-squalls, that tuned up the strained shrouds and backstays into gigantic fiddle-strings. This shift of wind let the ship head up nearly square into the old southeast swell, which made the vessel pitch furiously for a time; though it was too dark to discover whether anything was carried away or not.

So passed the first black night of the gale. When Braybrook came out to take his morning watch, Raymond went in and took another look at his patients, and, finding them sleeping, turned in "all standing," ready to tumble out again at a moment's notice when needed. The gale continued veering until daylight, by which time it had backened fairly round into the west, and again piped on furiously for an hour; giving the ship three separate run of seas to battle with.

Morning dawned upon a desolate wilderness of waters. The starboard watch lay crouched under the weather-rail, seeking shelter from the cutting wind and drenching spray. At the first outlook over the deck, it was discovered that the lee bulwarks were much stoven forward, and amidships, where the monstrous waves had found their way out, after mounting over the weather-rail and rushing across the deck.

With further accession of light it was found that the flying jib-boom was broken short off at the boom-iron; the sail blown from the gasket and torn to tatters; while the martingale stay and the two jib-guys hung trailing in the

sea, bleached by the wash of the turbulent waters. This mishap to the boom served to carry away the fore royal mast, which was broken short off at the eyes of the rigging; and, together with the royal yard, hung thrashing against the lee shrouds. Here was work for nimble men aloft, to send down the wreck; and a wet job for others to bowse in the rigging of the broken boom.

While at work pulling in the fly-jib guys, a worse disaster was discovered. The outer chain bobstay had parted; which greatly endangered the massive bowsprit whenever the ship pitched into the head-beat seas. As the vessel buried her bows too much to secure her bowsprit, while on a-wind, the helm was put up and the ship kept off before the gale. After much trouble, the heavy chain bobstay was fished up, and secured to the bowsprit by strong rope-lashings, passed round the spar just outside of the bowsprit bees.

The wind had previously hauled until the ship could now steer her course, with the gale on her quarter. Braybrook stepped into the cabin and reported the change to Captain Talbert, and received orders to set a reefed foresail, and head the ship to the eastward, as near on her course as she would go and make good weather. After the foresail had been reefed and set, with both tacks and sheets bowsed taut while yet dead before it, the ship was luffed to the east-southeast; this brought the gale two points off the starboard quarter, and set the vessel racing like a bird over the monstrous seas.

The lumping side-swells, still heaving in from the south, made the ship roll at times in an unseemly manner: often careening until her lee rail lay level with the white tops of

the racing seas. When the Fleetwing was thus soused down by the heavy lee-lurches, the foresheet dipped in the frothy spume of the waves, and the chain-plates were buried until the lashed waters spurted like fountain-jets from the side.

The gale held strong for three days, and the sky remained cold and gray until nearly noon of the second day; then the welcome sun came out through the narrow rifts in the clouds, in time to secure observations by which to determine the latitude for the day; and at length, while the watch were at dinner, the remaining storm-scud blew away, like smoke after the battle, leaving a pale blue sky arched timidly over the storm-lashed Ocean.

CHAPTER XII.

PERSONALITY OF THE LADY PASSENGER.

IN the afternoon of the second day of the gale, when the deck became dry, and the scudding ship had steadied down her frenzied leaps and staggering gait — so troublesome for the best sea-legs to encounter — the ladies and child, assisted by the captain and mate, ventured out from the damp cabin to warm themselves in the sun. And much they needed the cheering light of day and the welcome solar beams to tint their pale faces, and coax away the lurking remnant of timidity that still lingered about them both.

The courage of the ladies had been put to a much severer test than that of the sailors, who were permitted the cheering stimulus of personally battling with the storm. Deprive a person of the moral support gained by facing a peril, and you inflict the added horror of suspense to his apprehension of an unknown, because unseen, danger.

Mrs. Talbert and her child were snuggled together in a large cane chair, secured by lashings to the weather side of the round-house, where the bleached rays of the afternoon sun could bestow his constant attention, as well as the thin veil of cold scuds would permit. The ship was

racing along on the tops of the combing seas, making easy work of keeping the tallest crests of the fiercest billows from slopping over the quarter, or pooping against the stern. But so monstrous and menacing were the larger waves as they chased along with tigerish ferocity in the wake of the ship, rearing savagely up over the taffrail and threatening to invade the quarter, that well might the ladies be alarmed, and cover their faces and utter girlish cries of terror, though they soon subdued their childish fears and enjoyed the scene.

Miss Allston leaned languidly over the quarter rail, carefully supported by Raymond, and peered thoughtfully down into the sun-touched water, until a gleam from its iridescent hues tinted her pale cheeks, whilst the blue of her eyes was made brighter and bluer by the reflected azure from the sea.

The excitement of thus watching the ship bowling before the gale, fleeing from the whistling wind, and racing along with the mountain billows, awoke the slumbering fire in the dull eyes of the convalescent girl. Mastering her fears, she soon became amazed and amused with the ship's frolicsome capers, as she watched the writhing coils of foaming waters sent roaring away from the bows. The strong sunlight on the crests of the breaking waves was another notable sight to enliven her heart when she saw the wind-blown froth sprinkle the smooth deep hollow of the seas with silver stars of dazzling whiteness.

The ship rolled easily on the long curves of the gigantic waves, careening just enough to bury her lee channels in the creaming seas, hurling from them a glittering cataract of foam as she rose with a quick weather lurch, thus

burying her channels again and again, as if in playful pastime with the blue and white billows. When, in her deeper rolls, the ship washed down to her plankshеer, the lee scuppers would gurgle and splutter, taking in a pail-ful of the sparkling foam-bubbles, wetting the deck for fathoms around.

As Raymond and the girl thus sat confidingly together by the quarter rail, looking thoughtfully out over the turbulent ocean, and contemplating its frightful mood of wrath, frequent nervous tremors ran quivering through the girl's slender frame; brief recurrences of past apprehensions that were seared into her memory for a lifetime. In such moments of renewed terror, both of her pretty hands would clutch fast upon Raymond's arm, clinging to the strong, manly mate with a sweet confiding look in her face, implying that whatever the danger, there was safety for her with him near to protect her. It looked as if the young mate was fast becoming to her more than she knew since that terrible night rescue, so frank and outspoken were her words, so glowing and tender were her appealing looks.

The girl possessed easy, assured manners, yet she could be reserved and dignified if she wished, and often was with the other officers when occasion required. But with Raymond she had already assumed the rôle of a loving sister, openly worming herself into his confidence with sweet feminine ways, and seeking every opportunity to proffer her sympathy in his love affair with Mary Tudor.

How such delightful companionship as this was to end with the virile young mate, time alone can disclose. There can be no doubt that Raymond's heart was sincerely occu-

pied with another. But here was a noble, brilliant girl, worth a shipload of his puling Mary Tudors. Was Raymond sufficiently blinded to Miss Allston's superior qualities to resist her fascination during a long sea-voyage? Who can tell?

The girl was not capable of inducing the mate to break compact with his beautiful Mary; for she was as pure-minded and full of noble impulses as he. Yet, view it as we will, it was a pitiable situation for a noble-minded man to be thus subjected to temptation, bound as he was by the hasty covenant of love in an unequal match; it must surely end in breaking his previous bonds with Mary Tudor, and who shall be blamed?

Asenith Allston was a graceful, delicately built girl of twenty-two; apt and intelligent in conversation; pleasing and sprightly in her manners. A susceptible, warm-hearted creature, ever ready to lend a helping hand when pressing need required. She had a well formed, ideal head, sparsely crowned with soft brown hair; her cheeks were tinted with a delicate flush of peach-bloom, which imparted a most winsome expression to her animated face. Her blue-gray eyes, shaded by long dark lashes, were lustrous as moonbeams in her placid moments; though the high-strung girl could be easily aroused, till the blue would wholly absorb the gray in her flashing orbs; then a lightning ire would wither the assailant who dared invade her maiden prerogative. As shrewd old Uncle Joe happily expressed it: —

"Golly! sah, doan yer see, dat ar gal wul mind 'er helm ebbry time yer touch ar spoke ob 'er wheel?"

Why such a stylish, attractive girl should have remained

unmarried at her age was, indeed, a strange anomaly, — one of those grave physiological problems pertaining to thousands of other self-asserting American women. She was a girl certain to attract universal attention in the society of gentlemen, because of her sprightly, sparkling ways. Yet, alas, there surely was some grievous fault, hidden somewhere in the veiled arcanum of her being, which the world at large has failed to comprehend. A vital lesion of the nerve-centre, from some previous spinal hurt, only perceptible to the few, which causes the intellectual faculties to dominate the more feminine qualities of a loving, sensuous temperament. A type of woman such as a keen-eyed physiognomist can readily distinguish by her straight, slender nose, her thin lips, and her large, firm, and well chiselled mouth.

To all outward appearance, Asenith Allston seemed most admirably modelled to attract, entertain, and amuse the opposite sex; but beyond doubt she was not one to easily win to herself lasting endearments from a gentleman, — a sad misfortune, which shames the boasted skill of our practitioners, few of whom understand the cause or know the cure. Yet it is an abnormal condition which a skilled physiologist could determine at sight, by the thin, straight eyebrows, the insufficient growth of light hair, a lack of robust physique, and the absence of the abashed, retiring manners of true feminality.

Therefore it happens that such vivacious, keen-witted, self-possessed girls as Miss Allston are rightfully deemed forward; and, however beautiful and attractive they may otherwise be, they fail not to overawe men of less assertive character than themselves; as most men have an ever-

haunting fear of being mated with a dominant-minded woman.

Beautiful and entertaining as she was, it remained to be seen if Asenith Allston could withstand the severe test of a sea-voyage, the place of all others to expose every human foible a girl may possess. The constant attrition of two persons on shipboard, daily dependent on each other for social pabulum, held face to face till each becomes familiar with every freckle and moth-patch of the chosen companion, is a severe ordeal for any woman, with her fastidious notions and squeamish lunar moods.

Yet, per contra, if a woman has some more enduring quality than her beauty, some more winsome characteristic than her piquant tongue to offset her multitudinous hobbies, then a sea-voyage is the place to disclose her feminine attractions, where they will shine like beacon-lights midst the dreadful monotony of shipboard.

The ladies had spent three hours of instructive pastime on deck, in becoming familiarized with the sublime aspect of a pleasant gale. Nothing could so readily divest their minds of the lingering apprehensions still clinging to them, as watching the frolicsome, fleet-winged ship, racing easily before the gale, seemingly defying the utmost efforts of the larger seas to board her, or sprinkle the sparkling spray from their bursting tops as they exploded with an angry roar.

As the afternoon drew near to a close, the gale abated a little, and the tattered cirrus clouds became less torn and curled at their extremities, as they streaked across the far upper sky. The pleasant sun-side of the low-down masses of cumulus had been gradually expanding to the growing

warmth of the afternoon sun, until the western side of these vast cloud-masses had now become white and fleecy as snow-drifts, so far promising that the whistling wind would soon abate its turbulence. But there are two sides to the clouds to be judged of in weather prognostics. The shady side of these low-flying cumuli still remained dark as a nimbus, looking ominous with wind or rain. The squally appearance of their eastern aspect was in a measure confirmed by the surly dirge-notes of the storm-waves, which rose spitefully up into tall crests, spitting and spuming their frothy scum with the snap and snarl of fighting cats.

Though much of the lowering appearance of the weather was due to the low sun and the approach of night, yet it was agreed, even before the barometer began to fall, that the gale was about to increase, or the wind to shift and pipe on from another quarter. This made it advisable for the ladies to seek their berths and bottle up a few hours sleep before the change, and at the captain's suggestion they were escorted to the cabin and admonished to turn in.

Since the terrible experience of the first night of the gale, Raymond had put up a bar across the front of Miss Allston's berth, precluding the possibility of her being thrown out, however suddenly the ship might be knocked down in a gale. The young lady had since contrived to sleep fairly well, with an occasional complaint of sore bones, induced by the lively toss and tumble of the Fleetwing in her mad antics when throttled by the rough hands of the gale.

CHAPTER XIII.

CAPTURING THE FIRST SPERM WHALES.

THE Fleetwing was now twelve days out, and was fast approaching Flores and Corvo, two outlying islands of the Azores. For a week past the ship had been steering east, looking for sperm whales along the southern edge of the Gulf Stream, a large part of which stream continues on to the eastward until it strikes the coast of Africa, thence sweeps south to the equator, from whence it flows west until it joins the parent stream.

The very innermost curve of this great ocean current circles around the Azores, which makes the vicinity of the islands a favorite feeding-ground for sperm whales. It was this southernmost curve of the Gulf Stream, which cast ashore the Indian arrows, and numerous other American products, upon the Azores, and induced Columbus and other great navigators to believe that the Indies lay not far away to the west.

The so-called "Flores Ground" is about three degrees to the northwest of the island, in the latitude of 40°, longitude 33°, and thereabout. Though the masthead of the Fleetwing had been well manned, thus far the lookouts had seen no indications of whales. Neither porpoises, blackfish, nor even birds had been seen for several days, as

sufficient inducement for the ship to tarry. Yet, much to the surprise of the officers, Captain Talbert now announced his determination to cruise awhile on the "Flores Ground," hoping to obtain a good catch of sperm oil to send home from Fayal, where the ship would touch for the purpose of shipping four or five hardy young fishermen, to increase the crew. Just why the captain was so sanguine about seeing whale on such a dead-looking ground none could tell. If the wind held fair, the ship would reach the Flores ground early on the coming morning.

During Braybrook's morning watch there had been a current report wafted through the ship that Uncle Joe said whales would soon be seen. The rumor grew to such proportions during the night-watch that before seven bells it was asserted that whales were to be seen on the coming day. Braybrook had ever shown great contempt for Mr. Bailey's so-called prophetic power; but curiosity finally became so generally aroused throughout the ship that the steerage-boy was sent down to wake up Hoogley, and learn from him if there was any foundation for the story.

Hoogley confirmed the report to this extent: during the middle watch Mr. Bailey entertained his two boat-steerers with what John Hoogley supposed to be a vivid dream about seeing sperm whales, and put it in Uncle Joe's own words: —

"Darfor, brudders, ef I's right, dem yare ole Sogs wul pop up 'bout de crack o' day, an' jes gib de precious chilun time ter et dar breakfus' 'fore we lower de boats. So pray de gude Lawd whin yer go to bunk, Jose, to ke'p de

sole til mornin'. Fur, chilun, whin Uncle Joe bin seen de whale in he sleep, he allus sez, 'Now I lay me,' arter de gude dream. An', brudders, I spects de bressed Lawd teks it kindly ob dis yere ole niggar, for I allus feel dat I's been lie in his buzum arter dat leedle pray'r. Why, Hoogley, dis chile lubs the Lawd so much I duzn't tink he minds de brack on dis niggar."

There was something so touching in the Christian precepts of the pious old man that, whether Braybrook and other scoffers believed in his power of prophecy or not, they all conceded this one priceless quality, which had already gained him the respect of all on board. Uncle Joe's faith and trust in the Heavenly Father were like that of a little child casting himself on the bosom of the parent. The roughest sailor never makes light of genuine piety, and his harshest oaths were always abbreviated in the presence of the old darkey. Even Cape Verd Jose — the fiercest barbarian on board — was often seen counting his beads with awe when the old veteran was addressing him. When Bailey was asked if he thought it possible to redeem such a reprobate, his reply was characteristic: —

"Sure nuf, Jose am gut ar shinin' sole down in de dark sumwhar. An' de gude Lawd 'spects old Uncle Joe ter find it fur his sake. So I's kep' fishin' 'mong dat ar niggar's in'ards allers, an' de blessed Lawd wul bait de hook till it kotch 'im."

At daybreak, when the mate was called out, Braybrook, in a vein of ridicule, told him of the current report coming from Mr. Bailey. Without placing very much reliance on the prescience of Uncle Joe, the mate, being of a more sanguine temperament, let the story grow upon

him as he walked the deck, until he suddenly ordered the mastheads double-manned. And finally the fascination of the story became so great that Raymond himself caught up the spyglass and went aloft, to stay until breakfast-time.

Eight bells struck, and the larboard watch were called out, and the whales had not yet made their appearance. Raymond came down from aloft, and, without making talk with any one, slipped in to breakfast, evidently a little ashamed of the enthusiasm he had shown. Meeting Mr. Bailey coming from his state-room, the mate asked: —

"Is it true that you have promised whales for to-day?"

"Yis, Misser Raymon', de ole sogs am down off de lee bow sumwhar. Jis et yer breakfas', sah, an' let de boys hab dar lobscouse an' coffee; an' 'fore yer can git in de lines de 'parm whales wul be cumin', sartin sure, sar."

There was a tender tone in the old man's voice, and a pleading lustre in his one soft eye which Raymond likened to the look of a hungry deer when approached with food.

During breakfast, Captain Talbert asked Uncle Joe what was up, and was told that he had done a heap of whaling in his dreams of the first watch. Mrs. Talbert remarked that she feared he didn't sleep very much in his last watch, if he was anticipating whales.

"Suthin' better dan sleep, leddy. De Lawd am bin wid us ternite, an' de bressed Farder wul hole us in de holler ob de hand terday."

"What'll yer bet 'bout seeing whales, Mr. Bailey?" asked the skeptical Braybrook, with a sneer on his lip.

"Ah, Misser Braybruck, dis chile would bet yer all de

ole shoes he hab, 'gin yer old boots, sah; but it wouldn't be fa'r ter cheat yer, whin I's bin done kno' fur sartin."

"I'll believe it when I see um, and not till then," continued the second mate, as he crammed in the hash and soft tack, rather hurriedly for a disbeliever.

Just at that moment a clear, shrill voice came ringing down from the masthead: —

"There she breaches! There's white water! Blows! — blows! — blo-o-o-w-s!" cries that were like bugle blasts to every one on board, bringing forth the people from cabin, steerage, and forecastle, eager to learn what kind of whales were in sight.

"Where away are they?" shouted the captain, who, together with the mate and two other officers, had sprung from his seat and run on deck at the first shout of the lookout.

"Four points off the lee bow, sir?"

"How far off?"

"Three miles off, sir. A school of large sperm whales, heading to leeward."

"Sing out every time you see 'em."

"There she blows! There blows! blows — blows. Going very slowly dead afore the wind."

"Mr. Raymond, get up the hands, put the lines in the boats, and see all ready for lowering." And the captain took a spyglass from its bracket in the vestibule, seized the fore-swifter, sprang on to the rail, and went aloft fast as his legs would take him.

The lookouts were sent down to their breakfast, and the ship was run off with the after yards squared in. The four boats were got ready for a tussle. Irons, oars, sails,

and paddles were carefully inspected by the officers of each boat. The shieves in the davit-heads, and the tackle-blocks were freshly oiled, that a squeaking block should not frighten off a five-thousand-dollar whale, as had happened before. Tackle-falls were coiled carefully down on deck in Flemish coil. The boat-kegs were freshly filled with drinking-water from the scuttle-butt, and a canvas bag of hardtack tucked under the stern-sheets for refreshment, in case the boats were a long time off, as an all-night job often awaits a crew.

While this was being done, the whales had gone down, and the captain called out to know the exact time of their sounding. It now required good judgment not to over-run the school, for if the whales were too near the ship when they came up they would be gallied, and take to their heels at full speed. After a run of about two miles, the ship was luffed to, with the main yards aback. Officers and men now climbed into the rigging to help watch for the coming whales.

Time passed slowly. It was nearly an hour since the school went down. Suspense, and a touch of impatience, could be seen in every face. It was becoming an anxious moment, in fear lest the ship had run off too far. Speculations of that kind were being discussed in low voices, by one and another, when Captain Talbert's voice was heard hailing the deck softly: —

"There they are! There they are! A big school. Every head gray as the rock o' *Donda*. Hoist and swing the boats!"

With whispering voices the orders were given. The gripes were cast loose, and the cranes were swung from

under the boats. The officers took their places in the stern-sheets of their boats, and the boat-steerers in the bows, while the men took their stations on the main rail and the outside slide-boards, each man as near to his oar as he could get. The ladies were seated at the taffrail, near the mate's boat; Miss Allston looking with pride and pleasure on Raymond's preparations as he made ready to tackle the great whales.

After a good deliberate look at the school, the captain came down from aloft, explained to the officers the course the whales were heading, and about how fast they were going; and then bade them lower away carefully, spread out a quarter of a mile apart, and run off to leeward, under sail; and not to make use of oars or paddles.

Waiting by courtesy for the captain to kiss Mrs. Talbert and the child, and to lower the first boat, the three larboard boats dropped quietly into the water together. Masts were stepped through the bow thwarts, and sails set. Oars were got out and peaked, with a feathering edge forward, and in three minutes the four dancing boats were heading for the whales, whose pearly white spouts were seen wafting over the sea-tops before the gentle morning breeze.

Raymond took his station out on the quarter, to the right of the captain, who had the central position, to windward of the school. Braybrook ran his boat out on the lee bow, a quarter of a mile off, until the three boats were ranged in a line. To the surprise of all, Uncle Joe took position to windward, directly astern of the captain, which would debar him from an equal chance for a whale.

No one but Mrs. Talbert knew why the renowned old

whaleman should thus keep aloof from the pending attack on the leviathans. The anxious, loving wife had said to Mr. Bailey before he left the cabin that morning: —

"Take good care of my husband to-day, will you, Mr. Bailey?"

"Bress yer sole, leddy, de Lawd am wid us terday! Trus' 'im to de Farder, missus, an' nuffin shall harm de cap'n." And the old man's face beamed through and through with the divine inspiration which possessed him.

"But if *you* will promise to keep near him, good old Uncle Jôe, I shall feel so much better about it. Won't you promise me that?"

"Yis'm, if yer feel dat way 'bout it; dis chile wul lend ar han' ter de gude Lawd, to help tek care ob de cap'n."

"Thank you ever so much, Mr. Bailey. And I will pray God to hold you all in his keeping to-day."

"Dat's um, missus! Dat's de p'int ter belay yer tacks to." And the tears streamed down the old man's face, as his heart went forth to the prayerful wife. The intuitive young creature had foreseen the fierce spirit of emulation and rivalry between the first and second mates, and well she knew that both men would be more concerned about their own whaling than that of others.

The boats sped on before the wind until they approached within a quarter of a mile of the nearest whales; then some of the school began to turn flukes and go down. Captain Talbert instantly rounded to: and at a signal from him the other boats luffed to the wind, eased off their sheets, and lay drifting, waiting for another rising of the whales.

As the four boats lay there, rising and falling to the

gentle seas, the captain playfully answered the signals of his wife and Miss Allston, who had mounted to the top of the cabin, and, with their spyglasses in hand, were now amusing themselves fluttering their handkerchiefs to the boats.

Raymond did not deign to notice that one of the signals was possibly meant for him; but he went forward, and carefully looked over his whaling gear, with a quiet word of advice to Hoogley, the boat-steerer: bidding him draw the running bowline of his short warp a little tighter; saw that the box-line was coiled clear, the chock-pin well in; and bade Hoogley brace himself in the clumsy cleat, — as he would in the act of darting, — to become familiar with his foot-brace, behind, for either a right or a left-handed dart; asked to see this man, who was to be his chief reliance in many a tussle of life and death, grasp his irons quickly, to accustom himself to seize them at just the right point of balance, for instant use.

Mr. Braybrook, on the contrary, having his boat-steerer of the last voyage, took no thought of the kind; for Morey was a careful, experienced man, and would do all that the occasion required. So both Braybrook and Morey got out their pipes, loaded and lit them, and lolled comfortably down at their respective ends of the boat; prepared to pass away the hour pleasantly, while the whales were down below, feeding in the blue pastures of the sea.

At the end of fifty-five minutes, a single whale came up, half a mile away to leeward; and in an instant the two mates were heading their boats off after him. But Captain Talbert motioned them with his hand to heave to

again, and lie quiet until the whole body of whales came up and had time to listen, and satisfy themselves that no danger was near: for a whale has very acute hearing, and is as easily startled as a deer.

It proved that Captain Talbert was right in his caution, for soon after the full hour was ended the whole school came up in two great bodies, some of which were close under the lee of the captain and mate, not more than a quarter of a mile off. Thus the school might have been gallied had the over-eager officers kept on their course; for listening time must be given a whale after sounding.

At a signal from the captain the four boats swung off before the wind, with flowing sheets, all heading for the whales together. Fifty large whales, in two separate bodies, were spread over a mile of blue sea. It was a grand sight to see the mammoth creatures swimming side by side, heading slowly off to leeward, wholly unconscious of the dread whale-hunters now close upon their track.

At first the mate seemed to be a little the nearest to the whales. But as the three boats sped cautiously along and drew very near to the school, it proved that the captain's boat was quite as near as Raymond's. When these two leading boats approached within three spoutings of their respective whales, in the separate pods, Mr. Antoine and John Hoogley were ordered to stand up and take their irons. Both boat-steerers were seen deftly balancing their keen weapons, bracing the right foot back against the harponier thwart, coolly waiting for the time to dart.

The whales came to the surface again quietly spouting in unison with each other, sogging off before the wind

without a thought of danger. Numerous sea-birds were hovering along over the great leviathans, as the whales knew best how to follow in the currents of food-track. Many blue-hided sharks were seen in the wake of the whales, intent upon what the dyspeptic beasts might cast out upon the sea — as pieces of half-masticated squid, big as a barrel, were not an unusual sight.

The crews were now ordered to take their oars in hand, and be ready for action. Orders were given in hoarse whispers, and every movement was made with care; as a boat's bottom is a sounding-board, and the least thump of an oar would sound along the waves and startle the prey.

It was a breathless moment for all in the two leading boats, while waiting for yet one more spouting to bring the whales within easy dart. The whales seemed to linger a trifle longer than usual between their spoutings, but then time lingers in such moments of suspense. Was it possible that they had heard something, and would not come to the surface again? No. There they whiten! There they turn the blue sea to a pale green above their huge backs. There they thrust up their vast heads, spouting as deliberately as ever, just as the boats double round the starboard corner of their flukes — for a right-hand dart — gliding quickly forward of the humps. Then came the orders at the same instant, and both boat-steerers let fly their irons together, driving the keen barbs deep into the uprising bilge of the monsters.

Twenty whales let fly their mighty flukes at the prick of the first harpoons, as if all had been struck together — so quickly can one whale communicate with another in

a moment of fright. But while the forty-eight unharmed whales went plunging into the lower depths, the two fast ones continued thrashing the sea into monuments of foam, half burying the boats in the descending spray.

After a few vigorous blows with his flukes, Captain Talbert's whale rolled quickly over and cut out his twenty-foot jaw, thrashing it from side to side, as he felt vigorously about for a tender morsel, upon which to whet his rage. Foiled by the alert boat which was sterned quickly out of his reach, by jaw or tail, the enraged creature swept round in a complete circle for his assailant, then pitched and went down for a deep sound, running out the line so fast that it set the oaken loggerhead to smoking as if it were on fire.

As the school had disappeared on the instant, showing no chance for the loose boats to assail them, Braybrook and Bailey were expected to go to the assistance of the fast boats. The second mate went to help the mate, willing or otherwise, whatever his motive might be; undoubtedly meaning to show his junior in years and experience the proper way to kill a sperm whale.

Mr. Bailey had rolled up his sail before the captain struck, to be ready for instant service in case of a stoven boat. He now pulled down to the starboard boat to tender his line to the captain, if it should be needed. And he was none too soon. The whale was making a rapid, vertical sound, taking out the captain's line so quickly, that his three hundred fathoms threatened to be gone before Uncle Joe could reach the starboard boat.

Just in the nick of time the bow boat's line was thrown to the captain who knotted it to his own, ten seconds

before the eye-splice came humming round the loggerhead, and with a whang went out through the chocks, breaking the chock-pin in its haste. So the fleeing whale had another three hundred fathoms of line to tug at. Still downward the monster plunged until there were but fifty fathoms of the bow-boat's line remaining in the tub.

At this crisis Uncle Joe ordered every man into the stern-sheets, to keep the bow from burying. Taking control of the line himself, the old veteran served the loggerhead with more turns, until the tense new line was stretched to half its former size. The big Dutchman had been kept on his own thwart to trim boat, and he was now prompted to starboard, or port, as the strained cockle-shell of a boat dipped toward the one gunwale or the other. The line had now become taut as a fiddle-string, vibrating with an occasional twang that shook the boat, caused by the blows of the angry whale three quarters of a mile down under the sea.

Captain Talbert stood near by in his boat, anxiously watching every movement in the bow-boat; frequently inquiring what amount of line remained in the tub, but leaving the management to Mr. Bailey, well knowing that the experienced old whaleman would do the best that could be done.

Owing to some more desperate lunges of the thrashing whale far down, the bow of the fast boat now began to surge under water, dipping up a barrel at a time. This new movement of the whale compelled Uncle Joe to frequently slack on his line, just enough to bring the bow of the boat up to the surface again. In this way flake

after flake ran out of the line-tub, until the old man held the eye-splice at the end of the line in his hand. It was then that Uncle Joe showed the genious of the whaleman, as he called on the captain for help: —

"Golly, sah, one mo' dip under like dat ar an' we uns am dun fo'. Now, cap'n, len' ar hand, an' we'll puzzle dat ole 'parm whale."

"How can I help you, Mr. Bailey?"

"Cum heah, head an' head wid us uns, sah. Butt de nose ob yer boat 'gin my boat. Clove hitch yer short wasp on de line, low down. Den pile de boys all in de starn-sheets, an' tek ar strain on de line. Queak, sah, befo' we uns fill de boat, an' hab ter leggo de tarnal critter."

Quick as a flash Captain Talbert caught the ingenuity of the device, and did as he was requested. When the plan was completed, and the two boats took an equal strain on the line, Mr. Bailey's boat was nearly full of water, and would have filled in a moment more. Hands were now set to bailing, and the bow-boat was soon got free, and took the chief strain again.

"What's he up to now, Mr. Bailey?" asked the captain, hearing some new tune twanged on the line.

"Dis chile tink de ole critter am dancin' de hornpipe, sah. Doan yer heah de line trum, trum, like Tom Crow's banjo, up to Bedford?"

But it was not long before the fighting whale tired of battling with the sea under such a stupendous pressure of water; and, after a brief time of quiet, something new seemed to be going on below-stairs, and the captain again hailed Uncle Joe: —

"Well, what's the fellow doing down there now, Mr. Bailey?"

"Him cumin' up now, sah, ez any 'spectable whale orter dun fo' dis time. De line trem'les dreffly; wid ar buz, buz, like it am cuttin' frough de water down dar awful queak. Git out de lance, cap'n, for de ole sog wul soon cum up, an' he'll lay still ez ar de'd niggar."

Sure enough, the yet taut line was trembling visibly, with a ceaseless, rhythmic, humming sound, very different from the harsh twanging, vibrating noises of a sounding whale. Soon the line began to slack, and it became evident to all that the maddened whale had done his worst, and was now rushing to the surface for breath at his topmost speed. Captain Talbert now cast off his short warp, and left Uncle Joe to drag slowly in upon the long length of line. Putting up two lances in the crotch, the captain stood impatiently waiting the appearance of the whale, that he might tackle him while in a state of exhaustion.

At this time the other two boats were seen half a mile off to leeward. Raymond's whale was near them spouting thick black blood, and the captors lay waiting the death of their prey. The mate's whale had sounded out but little line at the beginning of the contest. Suddenly he turned, and came up quickly to the surface, ugly and uneasy, and evidently spoiling for a fight.

Braybrook sprang ahead on his oars, with what seemed to Raymond unnecessary haste in his manner and his movements. He pulled up alongside the whale at top speed, and fastened second boat; evidently meaning to get a chance to kill the whale before the mate could

haul in his line. But as Braybrook approached the enraged creature the boat barely escaped being cut in two by a sudden under cut of the jaw of the rolling whale, who showed, by his wiggling hump and the angry roar in his spout, that he was intent upon mischief.

Having missed his first blow at the waist-boat served to make the whale all the more fractious. Thrusting his vast head out of water until his eyes could scan the surface, he caught sight of the boat, and again dashed after her, bent upon grappling with his foe at close quarters.

Not having time to turn his boat and flee, Braybrook was compelled to receive the attack head on; the crew sterning with all their might to prevent being run over by the oncoming monster. Braybrook stood in the bow, lance in hand, ready to dart his keen weapon down the throat of the whale, if he attempted to bite the boat. The maddened beast dashed on after them, butting his vast head against the bow, sending the frail cockle-shell rods away, in the futile attempt to crush the boat.

While the furious beast was thus manœuvring to stave the waist-boat, the larboard boat's crew had hauled in their line, and were now ready to take part in the fray. None but a heroic soul could guess the source of Raymond's joy in that moment. The instant the line was in, he felt himself master of the situation. It added zest to his pleasure that he had a fighting whale to deal with, and that Braybrook — the owners' boasted whaleman — had found more than his match. With flashing eyes, Raymond caught up his lance, and stood ready for a dart, as he shouted to his men with savage vehemence: —

"Hoogley, coil fast on your line. Men, face about, and be ready to haul me on to that whale."

"Ay, ay, sir!" answered Buntline, Crawford, and brave John Hoogley, as the latter finished coiling his line, grappled his steering oar, and mounted upon the clumsy cleats to get a better view of the scene of action. A brave chorus of voices, coming from men as full of desperation as their young mate himself. The two green hands had sat quaking with fear, so appalled at the thought of approaching such an infuriated monster, but even they now imbibed courage from the unanimous assent of the experienced part of the crew.

"Are you ready, John?" impatiently called Raymond.

"Yes, sir, the line is all in." And John was already in position, waiting the mate's order.

"Then ship in your oars; and haul line, every man of you!" shouted Raymond, seeing that what he did must be done quickly, if he would save the waist-boat from destruction; for a boat cannot long endure such furious onsets from a whale when in mad earnest.

"Steer straight in his wake, Hoogley, till we're close aboard, for it will spoil our game if he sees us."

"Straight after him it is, sir."

"Near enough! Now sheer round his flukes, if you can; but, John, go over them if we must, and do it quickly, boy, before he strikes."

"Ay, ay, sir! Haul, men! haul line with a will. Do you wanter see the waist-boat eat up by the whale?"

The boat shot over the flukes, which John had not been able to avoid, as the iron was not well forward, and glided unseen close alongside of the rolling whale just as the

maddened creature flung up his jaw, and made a desperate lunge at the waist-boat. Down went Raymond's lance, deep in between the two uplifted fins, piercing the mad whale to the heart before he could fully deliver his blow at the other boat. Braybrook was saved, and the mate had killed his own whale.

This timely stab in the breast instantly checked the whale's forward career, though his massive jaws were brought together with a sharp clang which sent a shiver through every frame. The whale's fins stiffened and quivered, and a quick shudder ran through his writhing body; the lance-wound being just short of causing instant death.

Rallying slowly, the death-stricken whale rolled upright with a twinge of pain, and spouted black clotted blood, as he languidly jogged off to leeward in the direction of the retreating school. The right ventricle of his massive heart had been pierced, as shown by the dark venous blood. Such a lance-thrust into the left cavity would have produced instant death. As it was, the whale's strength weakened fast. The black, grumous life-current gurgled painfully up from his snapping, gasping spout-hole; and only by herculean effort could the dying monster get his breath, for the end of this gladiator of the sea was near at hand.

At this interesting moment, Captain Talbert's whale came leaping up on a half breach from his deep-sea sounding, spouting with a convulsive gasp for breath while yet suspended high in air; falling back into the sea with a crash that uplifted the waters into a mountain of foam. The whale was completely exhausted by his deep sound,

and his angry tussle below; and he now straightened languidly out on the frothy sea, heedless of any danger which might threaten him. The great sea-beast had remained down an hour and a quarter.

It was the work of but a few minutes for the starboard boat's crew to spring ahead on their oars, and pull the captain square up to the life of the motionless whale. A single thrust of the long lance into the palpitating hollow over the shoulder blade, pierced the lungs and brought the claret, red and abundant; for barrels and barrels were jetted forth from this seemingly inexhaustible fountain. It took the huge creature an hour and a quarter to die, though he was spouting blood constantly to the last moment.

During all this time the Fleetwing had been lying aback just to windward of the weather boats, where the ladies and the shipkeepers could overlook the whole tragic scene. When the larboard boat's whale came leaping up from the sea, and with savage ferocity sought to destroy the waist-boat, horror was depicted in the faces of all on board. The ladies were especially horrified at the cunning intelligence shown by the enraged monster, as he followed in the devious track of the boat while the crew were struggling to escape. As they watched Braybrook in the bow of his boat, standing with lance in hand, ready to bravely resist the threatened attack, the women clung to each other in attitudes of frozen terror, as they stood awaiting the dread event.

But when the young mate rushed to the rescue, and dashed so fearlessly alongside the mad whale, imperilling his own life to save the waist-boat's crew from the ivory

fangs seen flashing above their heads: then Mrs. Talbert uttered a cry of horror, and hid her face in her hands till the impending blow should fall; fearing that not only the boat's crew would be destroyed, but that Raymond himself would be crushed by that suspended jaw.

Miss Allston, on the contrary, could not withdraw her eyes from the appalling scene. Though a girl of greater nerve, she seemed as terrified as her companion. Yet she stood there transfixed as marble; watching with her whole soul in her eyes, as she prayed the Heavenly Father to spare that one noble soul from such a dreadful death.

When she beheld Raymond's lance flashing for an instant in the sun, then thrust by his strong arms down into the vitals of the fighting monster; and saw the whale instantly shorn of his vast strength by the blow, with clasped hands and sobbing voice, she exclaimed:—

"*He's* killed him! he's killed him! Thank God for his quick answer to my prayer."

"Asenith Allston! who is killed? Speak quick and tell me," cried Mrs. Talbert, still shutting out the dreadful scene from her own vision.

"Why, that awful whale: and it was Mr. Raymond who killed the dreadful creature with his own hand. He has saved the waist-boat from being crushed, for the whale stopped the instant the lance went into him."

"Oh, 'Senith, let us thank God for such a mercy, bestowed before our very eyes." And Mrs. Talbert again ventured to scan the battlefield, though still full of apprehension lest her husband might have something of the kind to undergo.

To the partial eyes of Miss Allston, the act of heroism

she had witnessed was sufficient to glorify the young mate to her, and enshrine him in her heart forever; believing, as she did, that the desperate deed was undertaken wholly to save the lives of the waist-boat's crew.

When Raymond's whale was seen spouting blood, a moment after, a wild shout pealed out over the water from the shipkeepers, the ladies joining in the shout and hysterically waving their kerchiefs in token of delight. And soon after, when Captain Talbert's whale flaunted the red flag in his spout, the shouting voices again rose, echoing up among the sails, and fluttered in broken notes far down over the sea.

The mate's whale soon went into a "flurry," running round and round in a small circle, impelled by a terrible death-spasm, which gave him supernatural strength for the moment. For ten minutes the suffocating creature continued to lash the waves with his flukes as he ran, throwing his gigantic head out of water and dashing it down upon the sea until an acre of blood-stained foam covered the surface around. With a last desperate leap, the dying monster flung himself nearly out of water, writhing with agony as he hung in the air, and fell back motionless and dead upon the water. It is a frightful scene to look upon, and the boats flee from it as from an earthquake, though there is neither intelligence nor malicious intent in any act of the death-blinded whale when in a "flurry."

The fluke-rope was secured to a hole cut in a corner of the tail, then the mate lay quietly waiting for the ship to come and take his prize alongside. Braybrook cut off his line and pulled to the ship, as it was necessary to still

keep the vessel to windward of the captain's whale till it was dead, and Raymond would be compelled to idly wait his turn, as the weather whale must be taken first.

At length, after a first flurry, the captain's whale died, without going into the sublime death-agony of his companion whale. He had turned up so near to the ship that by the time Uncle Joe had made fast his tail-rope, Braybrook brought the Fleetwing prancing along to receive him. A fluke-chain was quickly secured to the "small" of the whale, and bitted to the sampson-post, near the foremast.

The helm was then put up, the spanker brailed, the after yards squared in, and the ship run off for the leeward whale, which was soon chained by another fluke-chain alongside of his companion. They were large, fat prizes, and it was thought by the best judges that the two would stow down two hundred and forty barrels of rich sperm oil, worth, at the least, ten thousand dollars.

CHAPTER XIV.

CUTTING AND BOILING THE WHALES.

ALL hands were turned off to dinner as soon as the boats were hoisted up. When Raymond went into the cabin, he found the captain and ladies seated at table, and all eyes were turned upon him as the hero of the day. Tears were in Mrs. Talbert's eyes when she thought of the peril he had escaped. Miss Allston blushed profusely, lest Raymond should detect how her young heart beat at his coming. Captain Talbert could not help congratulating his pet officer on the success of the one deadly lance he had given the savage beast, and that, too, just in time to prevent the waist-boat's being stoven, adding a judicious word of caution for future occasions: —

"Ah, Charlie boy, it did my old heart a thousand times more good to see you fix your ugly customer in that neat way, than killing my own whale. But, young man, you were much too risky, hauling 'longside of a fighting whale without a man at the oars to back off with. I never taught you such careless tricks in whaling."

"But, sir, Braybrook was in more danger than I was. It looked then as if the whale would smash the waist-boat before I could get my lance through his hide. So I took the one only chance of the moment, and went on lively as I could, and did the work quickly."

"Ay, ay, and it was well done, my boy. But always plan a way of retreat in case of need."

"Work of that kind, well done, don't require a retreat. My plan worked so well I should like to try it again."

"We all saw it from the ship, and it frightened me terribly," joined in Mrs. Talbert. "My heart came into my throat till I couldn't breathe, when you ran the boat under that dreadful jaw. But I know very well what took you there in that reckless way."

"What was it?" asked Raymond archly.

"In fear Braybrook might kill the whale before you." And the captain and wife exchanged knowing glances.

"Oh, no!" exclaimed Miss Allston, with a touch of feeling in her tones, "it was to save the crew of the other boat from being killed. I'm sure that was plain to see." And the girl's eyes flashed with suppressed indignation at the false imputation put upon Raymond's brave act.

"But, Asenith, you don't comprehend the fierce emulation between the two men," retorted Mrs. Talbert.

"All the more noble was the deed, then, if there really is enmity between them," continued the spirited girl.

As the other officers came in and took their seats at table, the subject was dropped. All were in high glee at the good luck of the day, and the meal passed off cheerful and chatty.

"Well, gentlemen," said Captain Talbert, "we've got a nice job of cut and boil before us. I'm afraid one of those big fellows wouldn't have been here but for Mr. Bailey's nice management. I never saw that neat trick of two boats tackling one line before. Thanks to you, Uncle Joe, for that whale."

The old hero, too modest to be induced to enlarge upon the theme, smiled grimly, and meekly bowed his head. Nevertheless, he was very grateful for the captain's commendation, crowned as it was by Mrs. Talbert's kind glances, when she remembered how faithfully he had kept his promise to her. The one great deer-like eye of the old man glistened with obtrusive tears, and he piled in the food, in spite of a suffocating feeling at the throat, as if a school of grampuses were obstructing the passage.

He afterwards told Mrs. Talbert that he was completely overcome for the moment:—

"Ah, missus, de gudenis ob de Lawd am suffin' mo' dan dis child can b'ar. Gor A'mighty didn't furget dis uns onct t'rough de tussle ob dat day. Dear leddy, when dis yere ole brack brudder wuz tuggin' at de line, an de' boat tried so dreffle hard ter spill us out, an' g'long down arter dat whale, den dis nigger kep' axin' de Lawd: 'Doan gwine leab us, Heabenly Farder. Lawdy! Lawdy! stick ter us uns, like ar tick.' An', missus, de A'mighty wuz rite dar, all de time; 'cept when Misser Raymon' haul'd up under de shadder ob Death, wid dat ole whale's harrer on top uv him. Den, leddy, I 'spec de dear Lawd lef' us ar minute; fur dat ole jaw shet down moughty queak time; an' down went de lance inter do sinful heart ob dat ole 'parm whale. Bressed be de name ob de Lawd! fur he tuk care ob all us uns dat day."

At the close of the noon meal in the cabin, while the officers were waiting for the crew to finish their dinner, Captain Talbert took the ladies out amidships to see the whales before they were dismembered by cutting. Raymond's whale was the outside one, and lay breast up,

with the right fin out of water, showing just where the mate's deadly lance went in. It was a diminutive stab to accomplish such wonders, being less than two inches wide. It pierced the whale directly between the pectoral fins, though about a foot aft from a line drawn between the joints of the fins. It might well have amazed the ladies that so small a wound could have killed the monster so quickly, though their surprise was lessened when told that the lance entered four feet into the body.

The color of the whales was similar to that of a maltese cat; being a dark greenish-gray on the back, lighter on the sides, with the gray running almost into white on the belly. The head of a Cachalot is blunt and square-ended, shaped differently from that of any other whale. The spout-hole is at the very front of the head, to the left of the centre; so far forward that the spout is jetted out at an angle of forty-five degrees, and a little to the left, withal; so that the spout of a spermaceti is easily distinguished from all other spouts.

The abdominal part of the body is round and bilging, thence tapering gradually from the hump to the tail, but quickly thinning on the sides of its after part. That part of the body next the tail is called the "small," and is made up of a massive bundle of sinews, some of which are larger than a man's arm. The terminal end of the "small" expands into two horizontal propellers, termed flukes, which are hard as iron, yet springy as steel. These flukes taper away into two points, the whole outline showing most exquisite curves of beauty.

No one can but admire the elastic motion of the sinewy "small," and graceful flukes, when observed in full

action, whether seen in the playful pastime of "turning flukes," when about to sound; or amorously "loptailing" with resounding blows on the sea, when ardently endeavoring to call her far-away mate to the dalliance of love — as a human lover bellows "Meet me by moonlight" when trying to entice his mistress by serenade. Or when seen during those grand and terrible occasions when the flukes are used as weapons of warfare in the whale's mad moods, flashing, like the cimeter of Saladin, while seen through fountains of lashed waters and falling foam.

The men were given an hour to tackle their food and smoke the pipe of peace, before they were turned on to cutting. Then the mate's cheery voice was heard mustering all hands aft to prepare for cutting in the whales.

Luckily the massive cutting pendants had been sent aloft several days before; yet there were many other preparatory duties before the whales could be hove in. The ponderous cutting tackles were to be rove in the four huge blocks at the masthead, reeved from great ropes three inches in diameter. Some men were at work hoisting up the empty casks from between-decks, and cleaning out the blubber-room ready to receive the blubber.

Two stages were put over the side for the officers, where they would stand to cut in the whales. The stage forward of the gangway was for the second mate. The larger one slung under the main chains was for the captain and mate. The carpenter and his boy were busy at the grindstone, on top of the cabin, putting a keen edge to the cutting spades, and the long double-edge boarding knives, used for making holes in the great blanket-pieces, through which to toggle the tackle blocks.

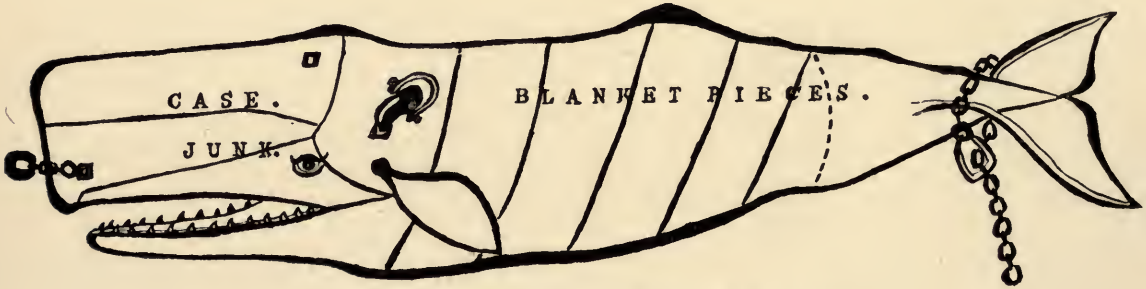
The big shackles and the enormous iron blubber-hooks were dragged into the waist, and the great oaken toggles were laid handy for securing the cutting-blocks to the blanket-pieces.

While all these duties were going on about the deck, the inside fluke-chain was slacked aft until the eye of the whale came abreast of the mate's staging, in position for cutting off the head. With his half-round spade in hand, Braybrook stood ready to cut a smooth round hole in the thick blubber near the bunch of the eye, large enough to receive the massive hook; then with a straight-edge spade he cut a heading in the blubber two feet beyond the hole, that the hook might not tear out in hoisting. This done, he called out: —

"Overboard, and hook on!"

This wet and laborious task falls to one of the four boat-steerers, and the starboard boat's harponier always takes the first "overboard." Tahiti John answered the call, having previously prepared himself in the simple garb of drawers, undershirt, and stockings; coming with his "monkey rope" attached to a broad canvas belt about the waist, by which to steady him while standing on the rolling whale, and to haul him on board when half drowned by numerous duckings.

The nimble Kanaka sprang down on the whale's side, braced his right foot in the scarf of the blubber, and called for the lanyard. The hook had been shackled to the lower block, and the tackle was now overhauled down the side ready for the "overboard" to hook on. With the lanyard in hand, Tahiti hauled the great hook upon the whale and secured it in the blubber. The tackle was



CUTTING-IN A SPERM WHALE.

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then hauled taut, taken to the windlass and rounded in sufficient to lift the whale a little, and steady him in the swash of the seas.

The whale lay back to the ship, the best position for hooking on, and for flencing off his blubber; but the whole operation of "cutting in" was now necessarily delayed by the difficult process of cutting off the head. This task fell to the captain and mate. Captain Talbert began by cutting a deep scarf down through the oily bunch of the neck, working over in a line between the eye and the fin, and following close along on the inside of the crown bone; taking care not to cut into the case and let out the rich spermaceti.

While the captain was at work around the neck-bone, Raymond commenced his work at the nib-end, severing the huge junk from the upper jaw-bone, and working past the eye to meet the captain's scarf at the crown-bone. When these two scarfs were met, and the head was thoroughly severed on the upper side, then the blanket piece was hove up by the windlass, until the under side of the whale rolled up, and he lay belly to the ship. Then the windlass was stopped, and the officers in the after stage set to work to do for the right side of the head what had previously been done for the left.

Before the head was severed from the body, a stout head-chain was shackled to the nib-end and carried inboard at the quarter hawsepipe, and the huge junk was left to swash about in the sea, until the whale was cut in. This matter of cutting off a large whale's head is fairly easy for an expert, in smooth water; but with a wallowing sea and a wiggling whale it becomes a most difficult task,

being impossible to make the successive spade-cuts follow the lead of the previous ones, for the long-handled instrument will sheer here and there in some indirect way, leaving numerous "slivers" of uncut blubber, which are hard to find and sever under water.

Now the head was off, all was clear for unimpeded action on the blubber, and the windlass was set a-going with song and chorus, until the first tackle was hove up to the masthead. "Two blocks!" was called out by the sailors, and the windlass was stopped, until the suspended "piece" could be boarded.

The second tackle was then toggled to the blubber, through an oval hole cut close down to the plank sheer, and hove taut at the windlass. The first blanket-piece was cut off and lowered into the blubber-room, amid three rousing cheers, from all hands, for the first "horse piece" of the voyage. Then the windlass was set going at a flip-flop motion, reeling off the blubber at a rapid rate. By a continuation of this process, length after length of the oily blanket-pieces was hove in and lowered between-decks, until the whole vast mass of blubber was flenced from the body, and the carcass was cut adrift and left to float away; becoming food for a shoal of sharks, and the countless birds seen hovering about and upon the palatable looking meat.

The best part of the afternoon was gone before the second whale was hooked on to, and it was midnight before the blubber of the whale was fairly in. The two junks were hauled forward and secured for the night through the bow-chocks. All hands were then turned off to supper; after which a boat's crew watch was set, and the other men turned in for the night.

At break of day, the hands were called out to breakfast. The heads were hauled into the waist, and the case of the first head — the part containing the liquid oil — was separated from the junk. The latter was hooked to with both tackles, and hove in bodily; its vast weight careened the ship to windward, bent the great mainmast, and set the larboard shrouds taut as iron bars. The tackles were hove nearly two blocks before the massive junk would swing inboard. When lowered on deck, it was hauled aft and secured to the lash-rail and ring bolts for the present. The whole head weighed about twelve tons; the junk contained a little over thirty barrels of pure spermaceti of a light straw-color, fragrant, and soft as velvet to the touch. The case was then grappled with both tackles and hove up to the level of the plank sheer, hanging nose-end down. A hole was cut in the top-end for bailing the precious spermaceti. For this purpose a whip-tackle was suspended from the mainyard and attached to the case-bucket, by which to draw up the fluid oil, which smelt fragrant as the breath of an infant. This first case yielded fifteen barrels of oil, being the larger of the two: though very large ones sometimes contain twenty-five barrels. When this wonderful oil-well was exhausted by the bailers, it was cut adrift from the tackles and fell with a plunge into the sea, sinking like a rock into the unknown depths below. The walls of this curious oil cavern were six inches thick, composed of what whalemen call "white horse"; an oilless substance, hard as gristle.

Strange to say, there is not a drop of red blood found in this whole oleaginous substance of the head, which is evidently a vast reservoir, used for vital recuperation

while the whale is hibernating miles down in the deep sea. Neither are there any large arteries, veins, or blood sinuses of any kind, though there are millions of minute capillaries distributed through the junk and case, adapted to feeding into the remote blood-vessels of the body upon special occasions.

Thus this rich straw-colored spermaceti, which was once used for anointing kings, fills a wonderful purpose in the economy of circulation, as both the semi-fluid oil of the junk and the liquid oil of the case are thoroughly aerated, for it is found to have as vital warmth as those parts of the body which abound with red globules. Physiologists know that the vital blood fluids can acquire their caloric only from the oxygen of air or water; and it thus follows that this immense caloriduct of spermaceti is a vast storehouse of aerated blood-food, which only requires hematin, the ferruginous coloring matter, to make it similar to the best arterialized blood circulating in the body, fathoms away from the head.

The trachea or windpipe of the sperm whale runs through the case, extending twenty-five or thirty feet back from the spout-hole, where it joins the bronchial tubes just before they enter the lungs. This great breathing tube of a whale is a foot in diameter, and out of it comes the spout, a vapory mist-colored cloud ten feet high, which is a foot thick at the outlet, or spiracle, and expands four or five feet at its widest. The spout blows fifteen or twenty feet along the surface before it dissipates. When by chance the spout is blown across the boat and strikes the face, it feels humid as fine spray, tastes a trifle saline, and irritates the skin as if stung with a nettle.

The "black-skin," or external pellicle of a whale, is thin as paper, bright, smooth, and elastic. This cuticle covers about half an inch of black (or other colored) curdy substance, which is deposited in radial fibres, like those of a mushroom, and contains the pigment or coloring matter. Beneath this intermediate, cushion-like substance is the true skin, and the blubber; upon which is found a fine close fur about a quarter of an inch long. The flesh of all the whale species has the appearance, color, and taste of coarse-fibred beef.

Whales bring forth their young like land mammals, having but one at a birth. Their milk is white, thick, and nutritious; they suckle the calves by means of two abdominal mammæ, or teats, located near the source of birth. They are of gregarious habits, roaming from sea to sea, in large schools of from fifty to six hundred; except the old males, who wander alone in solitary grandeur, having been driven from the school, over which they once presided as *Paterfamilias*, by more successful combatants; for they are pugnacious and quarrelsome in the family as buffalo bulls.

The tryworks were first started on the "head matter," as the spermaceti only requires scalding to keep it sweet during the voyage. The cover had been taken from the massive trypots early in the day, and two boys kept scrubbing for hours with sand and brush, until the great kettles, of five hundred gallons capacity, were made to shine. The fires were kept up from a cask of whale-scraps, which some other ship had left over from a previous voyage, and most of the afternoon had been occupied scalding the eighty-five barrels of spermaceti coming from the two heads.

The blubber-room men were busy cutting "horse-pieces," having previously cut every particle of body-fat, or lean, from the blubber. A great tub lashed to the main hatch was kept full of these pieces, cut to the size required for the mincing machine, which sliced the horse-pieces into thin leaves, a quarter of an inch thick, from which the oil is easily simmered in the hot pots.

After supper, "boiling watches" were set; which differ from the ordinary sea-watch, being six hours long. The tryworks were glibly running on the body blubber, the men keeping the fires up from fresh scraps of their own making, casting a lurid glow that could be seen miles away.

During the evening, the ladies came out for brief exercise, and a phantom scene met their eyes in the fire-lighted darkness. The oil-works were in full blast, being driven at their utmost, and a weird wild picture gradually broke upon their vision through the night gloom. The mainsail was furled, which left the forward view unobstructed from the top of the cabin. Black smoke and lurid flame shot up with a roaring noise from the back arches, reaching nearly up to the mainstay. The ship's deck, and the black sea around, were lighted by the fitful glare when the flame occasionally burst out free from the encumbering smoke, to be instantly hidden again; thus imparting a strange and grotesque appearance to the busy deck-watch, as they emerged for an instant from out the hadean blackness.

While the fires were slacked down, just before skimming off a hot pot, the boat-steerers could be dimly seen wielding the stir-poles, while turning the simmering blub-

ber; their swaying figures looking like ill-omened spirits presiding over the seething caldrons with some unearthly design. When the pots were replenished with fresh blubber, and the men poked the fires and applied new scraps, a clear flame would belch forth from the arches and light up the ship until one could see to read at the taffrail by the intensified glare.

The ringing noise of the cooper's bung-starter, coming from under the black smoke which enshrouded the cooler, was given back in several musical echoes from the caverned sails above, and it often startled the soundest sleeper below in his berth. Only the sharpest eyes could distinguish the cask, the man, or the shining copper cooler, through the illuminated blackness of the smoke-cloud from whence the furious din emerged.

Again the cabin group were startled by — "Away cask!" bellowed vociferously by the strong lungs of old "Bungs," as he hammers in the pine bung to a full hogshead of the hot oil; a call that served to newly awaken the whole pandemonium of the scene. Black objects which silhouette like men, emerged from behind casks, the windlass-bitts, and from out the cook's galley, where they had skulked away during an unemployed moment, to plunge into the noisy smoke-cloud over the cooler, and come forth in a mass, rolling away a cask of hot oil, which is headed up along the weather bulwarks, and lashed to the rail.

Then a fresh cask must be got ready and tested for the cooler, which involves the greatest noise of all; for three sets of coopers and helpers attack the cask with four-pound hammers and iron drivers, and they belabor

the innocent receptacle with blows enough to maul an elephant. This done, a pint of brine is put in at the bunghole, followed by a pint of hot oil from the pot. The bung is clapped in quickly and tightened. The cask is tumbled and shaken about, making a high pressure of steam within, which fails not to point out every bad joint or hidden worm-hole by a furious hiss of steam. "What a waste of precious oil!" cries the penurious observer. Not so, for the brine evaporates in steam when the bung is withdrawn, and the oil remains unharmed within the cask.

It was curious to watch the swaying, zig-zag motions of the hand-mincer when exposed to the full glare, on the front side of the tryworks, while the arch doors were open; his broad, bright mincing-knife attracted the glitter as he slashed into the "horse-pieces," with a right and left stroke, cutting the blubber into the thinnest possible slices, ready for the pot.

CHAPTER XV.

MAKING A PORT AT THE AZORES.

A WEEK had passed since the oil was stowed down, and the ship had been tidied up as if no such event had happened. As there was no further appearance of whales, the ship was to be kept off for Flores on the following day, where, if the weather favored, the boats would land to procure fruit and fresh provisions, after which the ship would be kept away for Fayal.

When sail was shortened for the night, and a boat's crew watch had been set, Raymond was invited to a whist party in the after cabin. As usual, of late, Captain and Mrs. Talbert were matched against Miss Allston and the mate, though until quite recently the order of playing had been otherwise, for Mrs. Talbert liked best to play with Raymond.

After a severely contested rubber, which fortune had conferred upon the younger partners, the captain got down his chart and shaped the course for the morning, and Raymond went to his state-room to write up his log. As the evening was warm and pleasant, the mate subsequently stole out into the starlight for an hour's reverie on deck before turning in.

Seating himself on the cushioned seat by the taffrail, with his back against the round-house, he gave up his

thoughts to home-scenes, and called up the sweet, sad-faced girl he had left behind, dwelling long upon the tender appeal from her tearful eyes while she clung so lovingly about his neck, pleading that he would not leave her. How long he had been thus absorbed he knew not, when aroused by a soft hand-touch upon his shoulder, and a sympathetic voice intruding upon his delicious reverie.

He turned, and saw it was the lady passenger, and reluctantly asked her to a seat by his side. As there was no one at the helm, they found themselves alone in the starlit solitude.

"I heard you humming one of Mamie's pretty songs; and the night seemed so beautiful from my window that I ventured out to look awhile upon the stars, which you have made so interesting by tracing out the constellations for me. But I fear, Mr. Raymond, that I have broken in upon your pleasant home-thoughts, and, if you wish, I will go directly away."

The girl laid her hand gently upon Raymond's arm as she spoke, as if to impress him with her sympathy and her sense of the sanctity of a lover's reverie.

"Never mind; I really didn't know what town I was abiding in just then. But I have long years before me in which to think everything threadbare."

"Oh, Mr. Raymond, I have been thinking how much a man is to be envied for his freedom to choose from the multitude, making choice of the one he most can love. How different it is with a girl!"

"Really, Miss Allston, I should have placed that boot on the other foot. I had supposed that a well favored

girl had only to bide her time, and choose from her multitude of admirers."

"Pray remember that our State has seventy-five thousand less of one kind than the other in pairing off; so that many a girl never has a really acceptable offer of marriage. But this is not what I came out to talk about. I hope you have been having some pleasant thoughts."

"Some pleasant, and some awfully sad ones."

"Let me hope you were not wishing yourself back home, as I have been doing to-night, after what I heard to-day."

"What could you have heard, — except from a spirit, — that you should wish yourself back?"

"Mr. Braybrook said in my hearing to-day that Mr. Richards was of no account; 'a fellow given to roistering life,' whatever that may mean. If that is the case, it were better if I were dead."

And again her little hand touched lightly upon Raymond's arm, and her voice trembled with emotion. Her tone and her touch fired the noble instincts of the man, and he sprang up, and stood before the grieved girl, ready to battle in her cause, as he answered, with a touch of vehemence in his voice: —

"I don't believe a word of it; and you must not harbor such a thought, whatever its source. I think George Richards is a worthy man; and none but a very Satan could speak ill of him. Tell me quickly, does Braybrook know of your present relation to Mr. Richards?" The mate's sailor-heart was fired by the girl's pitiable situation.

"No, not that I know of; and let me beg of you, Mr.

Raymond, that all our talks may be in confidence. I could not bear to have the second mate know about my affairs; the man is so sarcastic and hateful in his remarks about everbody!"

"He shall learn to bridle his tongue in your affairs. But then, if he does not know your relations, he might have meant no harm."

"What makes that man so cynical? He snaps up everybody he speaks to."

"He is embittered by baffled ambition and hard usage in the past. From that view of his case I have had much forbearance for the man, and have half believed that I might come to like him yet. Does he ever address his conversation to you?"

"Yes, but I have always repelled him, either by silence or retort; for I cannot bear him!"

"You must not do that. He is not a person whom you could choose for a friend; but it would be most unpleasant to think of such a man as your enemy."

"Perhaps you are right; but I am mortally afraid of him now. He speaks evil of every one. After risking your life, as you did, to save him from that dreadful whale, he should esteem you highly; and yet I have heard him speak lightly of your brave act. He even said to Mrs. Talbert that he should have done the same thing had you been in his place."

"I think he would. The man hasn't a cowardly fibre in his body. You all make too much of that job. Braybrook is too manly to purposely hurt your feelings; but it is dangerous to goad such a man by personal incivilities. I will sound him, and learn if there is any truth in his

slanders. Braybrook's shore life in port would lead him to see more of a man's evil side than I know of. But from what I have seen I believe your affianced to be an upright man; and I think you are a brave girl to go so far away to meet him."

"But just think! it is years since I have seen him! and what should I do if he is found unworthy of all the trouble I am taking? Oh, Mr. Raymond, you *will* probe this matter for me! And remember that I cannot bear to have my position made known to the second mate."

"Depend upon me, Miss Allston, I will act as carefully as you can wish. But there goes four bells! Time we were in our berths."

Raymond took the girl by the hand, and led her around to the front of the cabin. As they entered the vestibule, the grateful girl clung tightly to the guiding hand one precious moment before parting for the night; and Raymond could not do less than return the gentle pressure, in his honest endeavor to assure the tearful creature of his sympathy.

All hands were called at daybreak; and Raymond came out and made sail. The ship was kept away on a southeast course for Flores. She ran down past Corvo about noon, while the officers were taking the sun for meridian latitude. Late in the afternoon they doubled round the northeast point of Flores, ran in under the lee of the land, and lay by off Santa Cruz until morning.

Flores is the land of flowers, as its name signifies: a picturesque island rising three thousand feet above the sea, and, when seen at a distance, looks blue as the bluest of all oceans which washes its shores. The island is bold

to approach for the largest ships, has a rock-bound shore, and no well sheltered harbor. It lies in a genial climate through most of the year, though the winter winds are strong and chill: thus the climatic changes are variable, the extremes of heat and cold ranging from 45° to 85°, impressing the stranger more sensibly because of the constant humidity, which is so great that house-paper cannot be made to adhere to the walls, and veneering becomes detached from furniture.

In the middle distance, the island shows a smooth unbroken outline, sloping upward from the south to the dome-like mountain at the north; but when nearing the land, the shores are found cleft into many deep ravines and beautiful valleys, watered by streams along which are seen numerous white-washed farm-houses, about which every foot of land is under some sort of cultivation. In the sheltered nooks adjacent to the small bays, houses are clustered in villages, adorned with pretty gardens of fruits and flowers, and embowered among forest trees, though there are but few trees of large growth on any of the islands. These villages acquire an air of pastoral peace and repose, very enticing to the wave-rocked mariner.

During the evening the ladies came from the cabin for an hour's walk with the captain and mate. Miss Allston gladly paired off with the latter, and seemed in much better spirits than during the previous night. The half-grown moon hung in the southwest, playfully dodging among the occasional fleecy clouds that sailed lazily across the sky. While the moon shone undimmed, her light had the effect to make the smaller cloudlets look like flocks of slow-flying swans, on a pilgrimage to the

moon; while the large dense cumuli cast black and dismal shadows when they passed over the orb, creeping mysteriously over the silent land like groups of hooded monks marching in prayerful procession, and invaded the unruffled water like some stealthy bandit of the sea.

It was a night to prompt home-thoughts to the wanderer, and plunge him into pleasant reveries of the far-off loved ones, except when paired with a prattling woman, who would be apt to force him into agreeable gossip upon local topics, as in the present case, when Raymond's companion was bent upon knowing something of the geography and remote history of those mid-ocean islands.

"Please tell me, Mr. Raymond, aren't we near the coast of Europe or Africa?" asked the pleasing girl, in her sweet liquid tones, as she tightened the grip of her pretty fingers upon her companion's arm, when they walked away from the taffrail; where they had lingered to sniff the perfume from the shore.

"Portugal is the nearest mainland, and that is eight hundred miles distant," replied Raymond absently; while wondering just how much such expressive hand-grips were meant to disclose.

"Then how came these islands way out here in the middle of the ocean?"

"A very pertinent question, Miss Allston. We are over a vast volcanic ocean-plateau, which is steadily rising up in the middle of the north Atlantic, and which extends from the Tropic of Cancer to 50° north latitude; the only apex of the plateau culminating in the Azores."

"How deep is the ocean over this plateau?"

"The average depth is about two thousand feet, and it is surrounded by a channel of fifteen thousand feet; separating it from the Madeira, Canary, and Cape Verd Islands."

Mrs. Talbert now drew her husband across the deck, that she too might listen to the conversation, as she looked upon Raymond as a sort of encyclopedia in all maritime matters.

"Who gave the islands the name — Azores?"

"That was derived from the countless hawks found here. *Acor* is Portuguese for hawk, the English of which is Azores. Did you not see the numerous hawks and buzzards as we approached the shore?"

"Yes, I remember how they swarmed about the headland we rounded. But what brings them here?" continued Miss Allston, not relishing Mrs. Talbert's intrusion upon her *tête-à-tête.*

"The hakws come to prey upon the millions of smaller birds which are yearly wind-blown from the coast. Birds are so numerous and destructive among the islands, that at St. Michael's there is a reward paid yearly for killing four hundred and twenty thousand birds; mostly blackbirds, redbreasts and canaries."

"How many islands are there?"

"Nine islands, in three groups; which are administered by a governor and two deputies, appointed by Portugal."

"Have they always belonged to Portugal?" inquired Mrs. Talbert.

"No, they once belonged to the Moors. They were subsequently known as the 'Flemish Isles,' and were once settled by that people."

"Oh, my! were they? Do tell us all about their long, long ago history," exclaimed both ladies in varying phrases, having scented an unexpected romance.

"The Azores are generally supposed to have been the Atalanta Islands, which were subjects of romance and song in remote antiquity. They were said to have been successfully colonized at that time, but subsequently disappeared by sinking back into the sea whence they had emerged."

"Is there any foundation for such a theory as islands disappearing in that way?"

"Oh! yes; some of the Azores have amused themselves in that way during the present century, which serves to give color to the Atalanta romance. In the year 1811, a new island came up three hundred feet out of the sea near St. Michael, and was submerged after a few months' existence above board. The new island was called 'Sabina,' after an American naval ship, whose captain witnessed the birth of the baby island, and stood sponsor to the volcanic progeny.

"The Azores, in their present state, were unknown to the Greeks or Romans. They were first charted by Arabian navigators during the twelfth century. The Arabs called them the 'Nine Isles,' or the 'Western Canaries.' Old Carthagenian coins are still found at Corvo, and used to be current at Flores, evidence that the islands were once occupied by that people.

"Don Henry was the first Portuguese king to colonize the Azores, which was in 1432. Half a century later, Alphonso V. gave the islands to his aunt, the Duchess of Burgundy, who sent out a strong colony of Flemish

artisans and soldiers to hold rule in her name; hence they continued to be known as the 'Flemish Isles' until 1580. Spain got possession of them at that time — and of Portugal as well — and held them until 1640; the Spanish fleets making great use of them for recruiting ports, as their East Indiamen could just fetch the Azores when standing through the northeast trades, before they tacked east, heading for Madrid or Lisbon.

"Because of their commercial value at that time, the English naval fleets, under the piratical captains of Elizabeth's time — such as Hawkins and Drake — came here to waylay the Spanish Indiamen; and many a hard-fought naval battle took place in and about the island ports."

Four bells struck, taking the cabin group by surprise, so pleasantly had the hours passed while listening to Raymond's instructive talk. Much to the regret of Miss Allston, Mrs. Talbert sprang up and announced that it was time to retire. The ladies went to bed with the promise of landing at Santa Cruz in the morning.

At dawn, while preparations were being made for going ashore with three boats, the mast-heads-men shouted vociferously about a breach seen far away in the south. Captain Talbert came out and ordered the ship kept away in chase, running dead before the wind. Though there was a seven-knot breeze from the northwest, yet when the whale was next seen breaching, he seemed to be a trifle farther off than before.

After a three hours' run the whale disappeared, and was seen no more; though studding-sails were set, and the ship's speed increased, running on a southeast course

during the whole day. At night the ship was ninety miles away from Flores, and she was kept on for Fayal, then about sixty miles distant.

At daylight the Fleetwing was close in off Camprida Point, the west cape of Fayal, and the course was shaped close along the south shore of the well cultivated island, which rose 3300 feet before them. When the ladies came out, the peak of Pico was seen towering 7600 feet before them, about thirty miles away.

The thrifty land along which the fleet ship was sailing was everywhere laid out in grain fields, vineyards, and gardens. Though vegetation is exceedingly fruitful, and rich in color, showing a great variety of fruit-bearing shrubs, luxuriant grasses, and fragrant flowers, which burdened the air about the ship with perfume, yet there were few full-grown trees to be seen. Orange, lemon, apricot, grape, and banana were the common fruit seen growing everywhere. Fishermen were catching mullet, tunny, and bonita, as the ship passed their boats.

"Where is the port?" asked Miss Allston, after she had stood spellbound for half an hour, first gazing with reverence upon Pico's lordly peak, glorified by the golden glint of the rising sun behind it; then turning to watch the fast varying scene, as the ship swept past the adjacent shore; a bewitching panorama for an ocean wanderer to look upon. "Where is the port?" she repeated, having been too much absorbed to notice the captain's reply to her first question. The mate was bending cables, and getting anchors off the bows.

"Horta is twenty miles around on the east side of the island," replied the captain.

"Is Horta the chief town of the group?" continued the inquisitive creature.

"No; Angra, on the island of Terceira, is the capital, where the governor resides."

"What island is this?"

"Fayal."

"What gave it that name?"

"It was named from a common shrub, called 'faya.'"

"What curious things can we get at Horta, as presents for friends?"

The people are excellent basket-makers. But what you ladies will most prize is the Fayal lace, as the women make skilful use of fibrous threads from the agave for that purpose. They also knit fanciful open-work stockings in the valley of Flemengos, which place still shows traces of the Flemish settlers of four hundred years ago. You will notice, when you land, that the original Portuguese are greatly mixed with Flemish and Moorish blood."

At nine o'clock the ship ran into the bay of Horta. The anchor was dropped, the sails furled, and every preparation made for towing the sperm oil alongside of the New Bedford vessel anchored near by, waiting to freight home the catch of all out-bound ships which put into Horta. But first the captain must go ashore and "enter" the ship at the custom-house, and obtain a "permit" for trans-shipment, without landing the oil. He would also ship a few good oarsmen at the consular office, and would leave his list of recruits with the consul who made an aside business of furnishing all ship-chandler stores, from poor wine to good water; gaunt, lean pigs with the legs of

a giraffe; and, from pure necessity, fat fowls and excellent potatoes.

Before the ship was fairly snugged at her anchor, the health officer came aboard, inquiring for a "clean bill of health." The moment this official left, a dozen little bumboats rushed alongside, eager to peddle out their luscious fruits, and palatable "jackass cheeses." These traders were followed by another sort, bringing pretty-colored baskets, birds, and many other novelties; taught by a ready-witted experience what sailors could be most easily tempted to purchase, their stock varying from squalling parrots, to cocoanuts ingeniously filled with rum, which, oddly enough, entitled its purchaser to a broken nose, or a black eye, before morning.

When just out from home, Jack's financial condition is what Wall Street terms "dead broke." Yet the noble fellow is not above assuming the Wall Street methods of "selling short." So he trades off his last plug of tobacco, his only jack-knife, and, if he is not provided with a spare shirt, he does not hesitate to strip to his underwear and gallantly dispose of the only shirt from his back, resorting to his banker, the slop-chest, the day after leaving port, ready to mortgage his next year's wages for his one day's trading-fun in port.

Several whalers were seen in the offing, tacking back and forth between Fayal and Pico, lying off and on for their captains, who were ashore at Horta, shipping men and buying recruits. Large native barges were frequently seen going out to the ships, loaded with provisions, and carrying the new Portuguese sailors, who sat looking ruefully back to their native land. The boats of the captains

soon followed the barges, and ere night, one by one, the whalers took in their recruits and sped away southward, once more refreshed for their long voyage.

The sperm oil was safely shipped during the day, by securing beckets to the casks, dropping them overboard, and towing the rafted casks to the freight-ship near at hand. The captain and ladies spent the night ashore, stopping with Dabney, the American consul.

Early on the following day, a water-boat came alongside to replenish the ship's empty casks and scuttle-butt. Then came a barge, bringing pigs and fowl, potatoes, and other vegetables, sufficient to fill the pens and coops, together with fruit enough to adorn the tops and backstays for weeks to come, not forgetting a couple of large milch goats, white and clean-looking animals, adding a welcome luxury to the cabin table.

Late in the afternoon the cabin people came off, bringing a young doctor with them, who wished to reach St. Michael's. Raymond received orders to get the ship under-weigh and put to sea; and the men at once manned the windlass, and were set to loosing the sails. The ladies had enjoyed their run ashore, and had many pleasant things to tell of the quaint people they met, and the strange sights they had seen.

While the Fleetwing was taking her anchor, the barque Albion, Captain Norman, came round the point and anchored in the bay. Two of the whaler's larboard boats were badly stoven, and one was wholly missing.

Seeing the Fleetwing preparing to leave port, Captain Norman hastily lowered his starboard boat and came on board, and at once begged Captain Talbert to sell him

one of his seven new boats. This the captain declined to do, especially as there were two new whale-boats lying in Dabney's yard for sale.

The Albion had been fast to a fighting whale out on the Flores ground the same day the Fleetwing left there, resulting in several men being killed and wounded. The whale had stoven three boats, and, night coming on, he was gladly given up. He left with two lines towing after him, and when last seen was heading off towards Flores. The captains agreed that the breaching whale which enticed the Fleetwing away from Flores, might be the same fellow, wrought to frenzy by the goading irons in his side.

This startling news sent a thrill of horror through the the crew of the Fleetwing, for the men from the Albion entered into formidable details of the whale fight. They related that the mate's boat had been stoven by an up-cut of the jaw, which broke the keel and one gunwale, and wholly demolished one side of the boat. The second mate's boat received a down-stroke of the flukes, which left her in precisely the condition of the mate's boat. The bow boat was so completely demolished that the pieces were not picked up. The whale breached out fifty feet above the boat, and fell over upon the crew, killing four men outright, and wounding the third mate and bowman by breaking the legs of both.

Captain Norman believed he had encountered the demon whale, Mocha Dick. He described the gigantic creature as having three narrow white bands down his side, where a huge devil-fish had clawed him from the bunch of his neck down beaft his starboard fin. As a

further mark, this demon whale had an angular piece bitten out of his larboard fluke, precisely the shape of a bite from the bill of a large octopus, or devil-fish, such as sperm whales encounter on the bottom of the deep sea. The officers and crew were evidently thoroughly demoralized by the ugly whale, and some of them would never get over it.

As the ship stood out of the harbor, Captain Norman said good-by, manned his boat, and pulled ashore at Horta, doubly saddened by his ill-luck after meeting the Fleetwing. The sun was just tinting the peak of Pico with his good-night beams as the ship broke ground from the rocky bottom of Horta, and stood southward to clear the Pico shore, on her way to St. Michael's, which lay east southeast, one hundred and sixty miles distant, about which the Fleetwing would cruise a week, looking for sperm whales around the land during the coming full moon.

CHAPTER XVI.

AMONG A SCHOOL OF COWS AND CALVES.

THE morning after leaving Fayal found the Fleetwing about half way across to St. Michael. It was a bright, cloudless day, the sea not much ruffled by the five-knot breeze then blowing. The water was blue as indigo, and, with the air so clear, a spout would show white as milk anywhere in the ken of the eye.

As the sun rose, tinting the royals with his first ray, Mr. Bailey ordered the mast-heads manned, himself waiting for the mate to appear before he took his trick aloft. Hoogley sprang into the fore-rigging, and Tom Crawford mounted leisurely up the main shrouds, both men climbing aloft until they reached their high perch in the sky.

Hoogley stepped into the topgallant cross-trees, and hailed the deck to have the fore-royal lowered, sweeping his keen eyes about, on both beams, while the halyards were slacked away. But as the royal yard came down upon the lifts — even before the braces were hauled taut — he wheeled forward to look ahead of the ship, and at once loudened in stentorian voice : —

"There she blows ! — blows — blo-o-ows ! "

"What do you see there, John ? " hailed the mate, running into the waist, his eyes full of soapsuds from the ablution he was just then undergoing.

"A school of small whales, sir, right ahead, and about two miles off."

"How are they heading?"

"A trifle off from where we head, sir."

And as old Tom had also been bellowing about them, in a voice louder than old Stentor himself, every soul fore and aft had been aroused, and the men were seen tumbling up half dressed from the fore-scuttle and the booby-hatch — some coming with a pipe in one hand and a shoe in the other, having wakened with a doubt in the mind as to which article was the most important in a sudden emergency.

Hastily wiping his eyes, and tossing his towel to the cabin-boy, Raymond caught up the spyglass and ran aloft, hoping to get a look at the whales before they went down. A long, sweeping look with the glass, in which time he had covered more than a hundred whales in its field, satisfied the mate that they were a body of still whales, and had not been disturbed by the ship, as he had feared. Hailing the deck, he shouted: —

"On deck, there! Call out all hands, and make ready the boats. Cook, steward, and steerage-boy, serve your breakfast at once."

"What sized whales are they, Mr. Raymond?" called the captain, who was slipping into his roundabout, as he hastened along to the maintack.

"Cows and calves, sir. A big school, spread over all creation, heading about a point off, from our course."

"Haul aback when you think we are near enough."

"Ay, ay, sir! We had better luff one point, and keep on about a mile farther."

"All right. Helm, there! Luff a point, and keep her steady to her course."

"Luff a point, sir!" answered old Ben.

A shipkeeper was put to the wheel, and another sent aloft to relieve Crawford. Hoogley was sent to his breakfast, and all those belonging to the boats. When the last of the school had turned flukes, Raymond gave up the lookout to the cooper, and went down from aloft. Before going in to his breakfast, he saw to hauling up the mainsail, and ordered the main yards swung aback.

When the captain and officers came out, the four boats were hoisted and swung, and the ship lay drifting, waiting for the whales to come up. The ladies and Dr. Greeville sat at table to keep company with Raymond while he ate; all three boring the hungry man with questions about the location, and the kind of whales he had seen.

The doctor, a young Harvard graduate, somewhat overworked by his Alma Mater, took occasion to ask the mate to take him for one of his crew, asserting that he could pull a good stroke oar. Raymond had not yet found time to form a favorable opinion of the too exquisite young dude, and so put him off for the present; more intent upon loading up with flapjacks, fried bananas, and coffee enlivened with goat's milk.

Mrs. Talbert and Miss Allston amused themselves piling up the most palatable dishes about Raymond's plate, and urging him with persuasive words to partake of each. This occupation and pleasantry were suddenly brought to an end by a shout from the mast-head: —

"Blows, blows, blows! The school is up, sir, about a mile off, three points out on the lee bow."

"Stand by the boats!" shouted the captain, adding to the mate, who came rushing from the cabin with his mouth full of soft tack: "Don't put paddles or oars into the water until we have tried them with sails alone. Lower away, and range along in line with the starboard boat."

Once in the water with oars peaked and sails set, the boats ran down within an eighth of a mile of the whales before the school went down. For nearly half an hour the four dancing boats lay in a long line, tossing on the spuming crests of the seas; their sheets eased off, and their sails gently fluttering in the breeze.

The officers stood balancing themselves upon the stern-sheets, and the four boat-steerers were mounted on the clumsy cleats, supported by the boat's warp against the uneasy rise and fall of the bow. The men were ordered to keep watch, each along the line of his own oar, and officers and crews were alike eager to catch sight of the coming whales. School whales being considered, even by the timid ones, as a sort of boy's play, compared with the dreadful encounters when hunting the monstrous bulls.

Suddenly the whole school came up, the nearest whales being about a quarter of a mile away. They were seen in every direction over all the great prairie-land of the sea, until every billow seemed alive with the gray heads of sperm whales, whose mist-white spouts shot upward and drifted a-lee, like vapory ghosts creeping along the hollow trough of the seas.

The whales were gathered in clusters and pods, of five and ten; and in larger groups of fifty. The motherly cows and nursling calves slowly wallowed through the

azure sea; the sunlight flashing from their shining backs, like the far-reaching glitter of a thousand mirrors. Thus herded together in countless numbers, they were swayed here and there on a devious course by a few chosen leaders, like the banded buffalo of the western plain. By what magical power of ruling one or more leaders can sway such a vast assemblage of leviathans none can tell.

On seeing the whales, the boats all kept away before the wind together. At first Raymond and Braybrook were nearest to the school. Presently a pod of large cows straggled behind the school, directly in front of Mr. Bailey; while the whales near to the waist-boat now forged quickly ahead out of the reach of Braybrook, as if they were frightened. Uncle Joe saw his chance, eased off his sheet and kept away for a large fat cow, the most tempting prize of the twenty whales before him.

Cape Verd Jose stood in the bow counting his beads, kissing his cross, and mentally calling upon one of his island saints. His boat approached the whale with the utmost caution, none speaking above a whisper, and when they were three spouts away, Uncle Joe began to admonish his black barbarian how to conduct himself: —

"Stan' by dere, yo' big niggar, an' tuck yer iron in yer flippers. Brace yer brack leg inter de clumsy cleat an' git reddy; but doan yer dart till yer ole fader teld yer. Trus' in St. Antonio, ef yer wan'ter; but doan yer furgit dat Joe Bailey is pehind yer."

Uncle Joe's face now became illuminated with a weird, strange delight as he approached the whale. His one soft eye was fixed immovably upon his prey; his thick lips moved rapidly in mute pantomimic prayer, while his

whole being was centred, as by strong fascination, upon the one dark object before him. The only sound heard above the audible heart-beats in the boat was a low guttural clucking, made deep down in Bailey's throat, something like the cluck of a setting hen. Such was the aspect of the long, gaunt face of the man while in the act of charming a whale, when once he could get within fascinating distance of him. Slowly and steadily the doomed whale straggled behind her companions, and would soon be within reach of the irons of the fateful old whale-hunter.

The boat was steered noiselessly along in the whale's wake until very near to her: then, with a small motion of his oar, Uncle Joe kept away over the corner of the flukes, shot ahead along the small, luffed in forward of the hump of the half-slumbering cow; and then came the word: —

"Tuck in de irons dar, Jose! an' lemme see ef dar's eny good niggar blood in yer bones."

Instantly the two keen barbs were plunged fair into the life of the whale, and the whole universe seemed flashing with the fins and flukes of departing whales. The school was gone in a twinkling. Jose had been taken square up to the life, and he had done his work well. Henceforth the black Portuguese of the bow-boat was held in high esteem by Uncle Joe, whose great experience enabled him to appreciate a good job of this kind.

The whale had been so shocked by the two irons in her lungs that she neither sounded nor sought to escape by following the retreating school; but lay motionless, spouting away her life-blood on the azure sea.

When the boats were approaching the school, Raymond

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WHALING IN A SCHOOL.

saw that he was a trifle nearer than Uncle Joe; and with a view to striking two whales, he adroitly eased off his sheet so that the two boat-steerers could dart at the same instant. His effort was well timed, though Jose's iron struck first, which caused Hoogley to dart at some disadvantage, for his whale kicked before the second iron could be got in.

It did not take long for Raymond's whale to recover from her surprise. Aroused to self-preservation, she became frantic with maternal instinct to save the young calf at her side. Though distracted with pain and confused by fear, the brave cow threw her left fin over the baby whale, and plunged below, rushing on after the retreating herd.

When the school came up, the fast whale was seen in their midst with her calf on her back. She had succeeded in attracting the sympathy of the whole tumultuous mass of panic-stricken leviathans, who now sought to aid their distressed companion, each after her own method.

It had now become a moment of peculiar peril for the fast boat and her crew. Dragged by the frantic effort of the wounded cow among a great snarl of excited whales, all rushing helter-skelter in different directions, in search of the object of their solicitude, both maddened and frightened by the piteous appeals of the mother-whale, it seemed impossible to escape such a many-headed danger.

The boat was menaced by the constant uprising of newcomers from out the hidden depths, which often emerged in dangerous proximity ahead, alongside, or beneath the boat. Some came rushing to the rescue with their great heads beating furiously upon the sea as they ran. Some

thrust their heads out twenty feet above the boat, glaring fiercely about for some object to assail. Some hysterical mother-cows leaped wholly out of the water, falling crashing back upon whatever lay beneath, in aimless endeavor to show their zeal for the suffering cow, and protect their own calves, which are sometimes killed by the falling mother.

It was a crucial test for the best human courage. A trial such as bravery built upon false assumption cannot withstand. But to the constitutionally brave, the tempestuous bustle of such appalling danger becomes the source of wildest rapture. Raymond possessed one of those peculiar temperaments which cools as danger thickens, and becomes most calm in the thickest of the fight. To him it seemed an opportunity to win the final whaling triumph of his life; the novelty and variety of dangers simply appealed to his ingenuity to defeat them.

Instead of slacking line and trying to escape, when he found himself among such a tumult of panic-stricken beasts, Raymond stripped to his shirt-sleeves, got out his two lances, and prepared for slaughter. With lance in hand, he called to his boat-steerer, and spoke a word of cheer to his men: —

"Now, John, here's the chance to win our spurs. Are you ready?"

"All ready, sir!" and Hoogley's eyes flashed with delight, as he grappled his steering oar and waited for orders.

"Tom, stand by to bow me on. Buntline, and the rest of you, take your oars and be ready. Keep your ears open, and work lively; for there must be no mistake in the stroke of an oar."

"All right, sir!" answered brave old Tom; which was echoed by stolid but fearless Ben.

"Haul line, Tom! Hoogley, sheer the boat alongside of that big cow lying athwart our hawse."

And the line was gathered quickly in, while Hoogley put his whole strength against the steering oar to swing the boat hard a-port. With his leg braced in the clumsy cleat, Raymond gathered himself for a dart; when up breached a whale close ahead of the boat, rising thirty feet above them, with the line caught on her fin; threatening to fall across the bow if the boat was not stopped on the instant.

"Slack line, Tom! Stern all, Ben! Stern for your lives, boys!" Tom and the mate both sprang instinctively to the forward oars, to get sternway.

Down came the whale across the two larboard oars; her head falling just clear of the bow, partly owing to the timely sweep of Hoogley's oar, which just swerved the head of the boat clear of the falling whale, and saved the lives of Raymond and Crawford.

Though a fountain of falling water nearly filled the boat, Raymond saw his opportunity, caught up his lance, and set it square down into the life of the breaching brute as she rose to spout, close under the head of his boat. A rich red blood belched forth, ere the lance could be withdrawn. The other cow, which he had previously tried for, now lay just beyond, side by side with the dying whale; in went the lance into her side, darted across the back of the near whale, and the pair of dying cows jogged slowly out of the school together, their gory spouts reddening the foamy sea where the breaching whale had fallen.

A new division of oars had to be made from the three-oar side; then again the boat was hauled ahead by the line. The snarl of leaping, rolling whales now became thicker than ever about the fast boat. Some lay with their heads thrust out over the backs of others, tossing and squirming their lithe bodies about like eels.

Just ahead of the boat were two large cows, with small calves at their sides. They were lying on each side of the line, which thrashed up and down between them whenever the boat rose on a sea. These whales were nearly a boat's length apart; room enough for passing; but as the calves were on the off side of the cows, both whales would strike on the side toward the boat, in fear of harming their young. The probability of a stoven boat could be avoided by going outside of this pair. But as danger was not an element of much weight in Raymond's calculations, it never occurred to him to be satisfied with one whale, wholly exempt from danger, and his choice was made for two or none!

"Be quick with your oars, there, Buntline. Overboard with the broken ones, and ship out the harponier for a tub-oar."

"All ready with the oars, sir," answered Ben.

"Haul ahead, Tom! Take your oar, Hoogley."

"Inside or outside of them uns, sir?" asked the boat-steerer.

"What, John; don't ask foolish questions. 'Tween 'em, of course, and give me a set at them both. Steer for the starboard one first; and then, my boy, lively is the word, for the other. Hold the bow steady while I lance 'em, and I'll answer for the kicking."

"Ay, ay, sir!" and brave Hoogley entered into the spirit of the thing with a chuckle of delight. Buntline rapped the tub-oarsman over the head, for gawking round at the whales; muttering between his teeth: "Mind yer oar, greenhorn; the mate'll boss the for'ard job, widout yer help."

The boat ran noiselessly in between the whales, and down went the lance with good result into the right-hand one, and up went the flukes of both whales. But Tom held the boat too far forward for the stern to be reached, though the steering oar was broken into three pieces by the ferocious thrashing of the port whale's tail. The port whale caught her calf under her fin, and pitched to go down; but with a long dart Raymond "pitch-poled" his lance into the retreating cow, with doubtful result, as she was well under water. In about two minutes the calf came up, soon followed by the mother whale, who had become too sick to attend to her baby, for she was spouting thick blood.

A wild shout broke from the crew, joined by even the timid tub oarsman, who had already learned to fear Ben's big hand more than the kick of a whale. Brave Hoogley lay in a half-faint, slumped down in the stern-sheets. The loom of the broken steering-oar had struck him in the chest, and knocked the breath from his body. Slacking the line out sufficiently to clear the boat from the whales, Raymond went aft to examine the boat-steerer. As there were no bones broken, only a big, black bruise, a few minute doses of arnica were administered to overcome the nerve-shock, and John was bid to keep quiet.

Tom Crawford was sent aft to rig out the midship oar

to steer by, and Raymond took little Bob Cross, the cabin-boy, forward to bow the line, as there was now no further use for a stroke oar. Only a tub and midship oar could be manned, all others being broken. The whole school now went down, including the fast whale. Sounding and running, they kept down nearly half an hour, which gave the whales time to overcome their panic. This was determined by quickening their speed to a brisk run, which could not have occurred without straightening out the snarl.

About this time Captain Talbert pulled up and fastened to one of the first two whales seen spouting blood, throwing a drug-iron into the other, with a waif attached, in case the loose whale should straggle away before she died. Braybrook secured the third whale, which was heading directly away from the others. Uncle Joe, whose whale had "turned up" and lay with a flag-staff in her side, now took to his oars and pulled down and fastened to Raymond's fourth whale.

When the fast whale came up, the whole school had become quite orderly. The whales had broken up into three separate pods. Six small cows with calves were still attached to the mate's whale, having greater maternal sympathy for her than the older dams, which had concluded to look out for themselves, and take care of their own babies, and let their wounded neighbor shift for herself — an almost human conclusion.

The school was now racing away to windward, and passed close astern of the ship, so near that the ladies hailed Raymond to ask where Hoogley was. Tom pointed down under his legs, where the boat-steerer's pale face

was seen with a ghastly grin on his lips, while Raymond answered : —

"John is taking a watch below, as we now stand watch-and-watch aboard of this craft."

A shudder crept through the feminine frames, as the women witnessed the blood-stained condition of the mate and his crew, with the added fear that perhaps the brave Malay was lying there maimed for life.

About a third of the line had been sounded out.

The men had been hauling lustily while the boat was spinning on after the school, and were still grappled to the line, gathering it in hand over hand, in fear the whales would sound again. The boat approached close upon the hindmost whales, the fast whale having dashed ahead among the very foremost of the herd. This promised another chance for the mate to ply his lance, while the boat passed through the hind tier of cows, all of which had calves snuggled close up to their "smalls," with the flukes of the young ones lapped against the mother-whales.

As the school was running fast, the mate got out a drug-iron, hoping to hamper one of the loose whales so she would slack astern, and perhaps be caught by one of the other boats. The boat slid alongside of a fat young cow, big with calf, which was making laborious work, keeping along with the rest. A good lance was thrown, and brought blood; then the drug-iron was flung into her as she shot quickly ahead. This had the effect to speed up the whole school, all but the drugged whale, which soon straggled astern and was secured by the waist-boat.

As there were no other whales in reach of the boat,

Raymond hauled ahead to kill the fast whale. Before he could reach her, a young cow came up, and the two quickened their speed, running side by side, each having a small calf riding "pig-back," clinging fast to the "small."

With lance in hand, the mate approached the loose whale, greatly elated at this unexpected luck. But the timid creature became frightened, settled under water, and disappeared. Supposing she had gone for good, Raymond hauled on and lanced the fast whale, which immediately checked her speed. The little calf dropped off from his perch, and for a time kept close alongside of the boat. Tom patted the pretty creature on his back, and humorous old Ben put his hat on the baby's head.

Suddenly the loose cow rose near the boat, probably attracted by some piteous signal from the calf, which manifested considerable distress for its dying mother, which paid no attention to her almost orphaned babe. Instantly Raymond caught up his lance from the crotch, and with a cry of delight thrust it into the breast of the rolling cow, as she turned fin out at the head of his boat. A swift shudder ran through her, showing she had received her death; and she died with no other motion but a quiver of the upraised fin, and a spasmodic curling up of the corners of the flukes. This was Raymond's seventh whale. Six of his captives were still spouting blood to leeward, though the first two were at that moment thrashing about in their flurry. The fast whale ran on half a mile to windward, and then in a spasm of distress rolled up with both fins out. The boat was hauled up quickly,

and a lance put down between her fins, which killed her in a few minutes.

A hole was cut in the edge of the spout-hole, a tow-rope attached, sail set upon the boat, and the dead whale was towed down to the other whale half a mile to leeward. The moaning calf was sometimes running with the boat, and at other times nestling against the side of his dead mother.

The lantern keg was got out, the head extracted, and all hands fell to upon the hardtack, ravenous as bears. Even Hoogley roused up and showed an interest in the occasion, by soaking a biscuit in the sea and nibbling painfully at it; for arms, shoulders, and jaws were made stiff and lame from his hurt.

Tears being discovered on old Ben's corrugated cheeks, wiggling in and out among the rough furrows, with other tears grouped in mournful companionship on the end of his red nose, Raymond sought to elicit the source of the old veteran's grief: —

"What's up with you, Ben?"

"Please, sir, I wus jus' thinkin', me an' this little un am both orphans togedder," and the weeping old salt stroked the back of the baby whale, with a guttural, gurgling noise in his throat, which was meant for a sob; but, by mistake, sounded like water gurgling from a bung-hole. Nevertheless, it was a genuine grief, the comical upheaval of a tender heart, now fifty years an orphan.

And brave Ben Buntline laid his frosted head on the gunwale and wept like a child. His senile grief was contagious, for Tom patted his loved shipmate on the back, and bade him not make a fool of himself; but Tom's

voice also choked, and his eyes grew red, and he found it best to mind his own business, and not disturb the two mourners — the orphaned whale and orphaned man — and Tom went back to eating hardtack; and the toddy blossoms on his huge nose bloomed out redder than ever.

When the boat reached the leeward cow, she too was taken in tow; and the sail was trimmed so as to lay for the ship. The Fleetwing was over a mile off, just then, taking the last of the six dead whales alongside. In a little while Braybrook and Bailey were seen pulling to windward to help tow the larboard boat's whales to the ship.

After an hour's towing, the eight whales were all fluke-chained alongside, and the hands were turned off to dinner. The ladies could hardly be induced to go in to their meal, having become so interested in the two orphaned whales, which kept nosing round among the dead cows, seeking to find one whale yet in the quick. The noble-hearted Braybrook had lanced and killed the tiny calf which followed one of his whales; but, perhaps, like poor Ben, he could not bear to be reminded of his own orphanage.

The heads of all these whales were cut square off at the neck-joint, and hove in whole, jaw and all, which made much quicker work in cutting them in. A good two days were occupied before the eight heads were bailed and cut up, and the empty cases pitched overboard. Every Jack was allowed a half dozen teeth to carve or carry home to his friends; and all were given pieces of the jaws for making white-bone canes; while to the ladies and the doctor it was a scene of great novelty, watching the officers dis-

secting the whales' heads. A tubful of the odorous spermaceti was taken into the lower cabin for the child and ladies to bathe in — an old-time royal anointing, which only required the simple addition of crowning to make queens of them all.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE PERFIDIOUS ALBION.

THOUGH the best of lookouts had been kept while boiling on the whales, and the Fleetwing had traversed the whole ground over and over, sailing a hundred miles each way, yet not the spout of a whale had been seen since the departure of the school.

The whales of the last catch were turning out well; they varied from twenty-five to forty barrels, making an average of thirty-five barrels each. This made the Fleetwing's whole catch since sailing amount to five hundred and twenty barrels; a showing rarely equalled so early in a ship's voyage.

Captain Talbert had decided to go back into Horta and ship his last catch by the home-bound vessel, if he could reach port before she sailed, and had given orders to head round towards Fayal early in the morning.

The Albion had come in sight during the afternoon. Captain Norman ran down to speak the Fleetwing just before dark, and came aboard and spent the evening. He had secured a new lot of boats at Fayal, and his officers had regained their spirits, and were now eager to tackle another whale. Considerable surprise was expressed when they spoke the Fleetwing and their captain hailed with the usual technism: —

"Hope to see you very well, Captain Talbert?"

"Very well, I thank you. How is Captain Norman?"

"A little more hopeful than when we last met. Got any more big whales lately?" he asked, with a jolly laugh at his own futile joke; without a thought that the Fleetwing had taken whales since leaving port.

"No large whales. But we have taken eight fat cows since seeing you," was answered with a genuine effort not to appear elated.

"The devil you have! Where in thunder did you find 'em?"

"Right about here. Come aboard, and we'll tell you all about it."

"Thank you. I'll come, if you will give me a scrap for luck."

It is not a pleasant event when an unlucky whaler meets a lucky one. Birds of a feather take a deal more comfort in condoling together. Every effort was made to cheer up Captain Norman's drooping spirits during the evening, and with apparent success, until he asked Talbert to "mate" with the Albion while they kept company. This request was refused, as Captain Talbert was a little superstitious about tampering with his present good fortune by joining chances with such an unlucky ship. Norman showed a little petulance at this denial, and soon asked to have his boat manned, and went aboard of his own ship. To soften the matter, Mrs. Talbert asked Captain Norman to take supper with them the next day at six, and he accepted.

During the following day, the two ships cruised towards Fayal, keeping about five miles apart. Late in the after-

noon, the Albion began to close up with the Fleetwing, to be in position for the captain to avail himself of his invitation to tea. The vessels had approached within two miles of each other when a spout was "raised" from the mast-heads of both ships at the same time.

The spout proved to be that of a large sperm whale, about two miles off, directly ahead of the Albion, which was the lee ship, and would have had no chance at the whale but for this unlucky invitation to tea. As it was, the two ships had an equal chance, and it would have been best to have "mated," as half a whale is better than none.

To increase his chance, Captain Talbert ordered all sail put upon the ship; the topgallant-sails and royals having been furled in courtesy to Captain Norman, whose vessel could not otherwise have kept up with his invitation to tea. Owing to her superior sailing, the Fleetwing's boats were in position to lower first, and they peaked their oars, and sailed carefully down towards the whale. Captain Talbert remained on board to direct his three boats from the masthead.

The Albion's boats were soon lowered, and, with marked discourtesy, took to their oars, as well as sails, at the risk of gallying the whale. Raymond had been delayed, in lowering, by a kink in his boat-tackle getting jammed in the davit-head; which mishap gave Braybrook the lead, and he got a good start ahead of the Albion's boats, and felt sure of his prize.

Captain Norman's boat was the leading one from his ship, and by the aid of oars he came bowling down to Braybrook, compelling the latter to also take oars to pre-

vent Norman's boat going past him. Braybrook was mad all through, and with many an oath against his competitor, urged the crew to desperate work at the oars. Thus the two boats approached the whale, Braybrook keeping the lead; and though Norman saw that he could by no possibility gain the chance, he persisted in keeping up the race. When within two spoutings, the whale heard the rattle of rowlocks, wheeled suddenly about with his eye fair upon the boats, gave a knowing wiggle with his hump, and, without any apparent effort, sank like a stone, and was gone in an instant. Not even the masthead lookouts saw anything more of him. Braybrook lay hove up a while, but Norman pulled back to his ship.

Captain Talbert had seen the whole affair from the masthead, and was very indignant about it. He soon made a signal of recall for the boats, and stood close down past the Albion to pick them up. When the boats were hoisted, the yards were braced forward, and the Fleetwing sped away from the perfidious Albion, which was soon left in the distance astern, and henceforth she was spoken of as the "dog in the manger." Braybrook was tuned up to a very high key by being thus robbed of his first fair chance for a whale.

The ship kept on for several hours after dark, and then tacked back towards St. Michael, endeavoring to reach well up to windward of their unpleasant companion. A gallied whale usually works to windward, and Captain Talbert desired to spend another day looking for him, before going into Horta.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE FIGHT WITH A DEMON WHALE.

BY taking advantage of a slant of wind during the night, in the morning the ship was fifty miles to windward of her position on the previous day. About nine o'clock a spout was raised which proved to be a large, lone whale, and was thought to be the whale they were in search of. The ship ran off to get good run of him, for the whale's movements were found so erratic that the captain concluded to stay aloft and look after him, and sent down the three larboard boats. The whale never came up where he was looked for, but opposite to where he headed when he went down. Uncle Joe declared that he was crippled, as none but a wounded whale ever used such cunning manœuvres.

Having approached near enough for lowering, the three larboard boats went down, and were soon going full tilt off to leeward, under sail. The boats were well separated, with the larboard boat in the middle and ahead. As Raymond had got a good start, and had the wind on his quarter, — the boat's best point of sailing, — he steadily increased his lead.

Dr. Greeville was in the boat. Having reminded the mate of his promise to that effect, the young Esculapius was permitted to take the tub-oarsman's place. He was

in high glee at the thought of a whale-hunt under the guidance of such a fiery young Hotspur as Charlie Raymond was said to be. The young medico was a little over-boastful of the valorous deeds he intended to accomplish. The pretty little dude looked upon a real whale-fight as something a trifle more dangerous than pig-killing. He was seriously intent upon a real thrilling affair to relate to his fellow-alumni at Cambridge upon his return.

When the boats were lowered, the whale was about a mile off. They gained slowly upon him, though the breeze was fresh, and the men were ranged along the weather gunwale, causing the boat to go very fast. Raymond was in the best of spirits, as the fleet craft leaped from sea to sea, and he realized that he had the whole field to himself. Hoogley was in his place, for the first time since he recovered from the blow on his chest. He stood on the bow thwart, supporting himself by the mast, which bent and creaked in the strong wind. The brave fellow seemed mettlesome as ever, as he stood watching every movement of the whale.

When the boat approached within an eighth of a mile of the whale, the mate suddenly mounted upon the foot-cleats, and looked long and closely at the monster before him. Mysterious glances were exchanged between the mate and boat-steerer, which evidently had an ominous meaning. Raymond had discovered that he was in chase of a fast whale. There was no reason why this one fact should be kept from the men; but there was reason why he should not make known the other startling fact he had discovered, of *three broad, white stripes* down the starboard

side of the whale. This determined that they had the fighting monster of the Albion before them.

From that moment there was a delirium of excitement seen in the young mate's eyes, which could not fail to soon be imparted to the crew. Raymond was one to make himself felt at all times among his men; and upon any such special occasion as this — when his own soul was ablaze with valorous impulses — he could not fail to impress his crew with his own fearless purposes.

The mate realized the demoralizing effect that his discovery would have upon the crew, and meant that they should not know that he was about to attack a fighting whale — perhaps Mocha Dick, the terror of all whalemen, the whale which Captain Norman believed had stoven his boats and killed his men.

Eagerly the men now watched the mate's every movement, every glance. Brighter and brighter his gray eyes gleamed, growing luminous with a strange inward light; flashing at times with a terrible energy, as if he were nerving himself to grapple with his prey.

The mate's eyes were at first directed far off on the sea. Gradually his glances dropped more and more, until at length his gaze was directed low down in a line with the bow of the boat. By this token the crew knew that they were steadily nearing the whale, and were almost upon him. This knowledge made the heart-beats of the men grow louder and louder. Yet, unaccountably to them, the mate now grew more calm and stern and severe. His lips curved into an expression as savage as Braybrook's. His voice sank to a hoarse whisper, as he begged the men not to move a muscle, or stir a peg, lest the whale should hear the rustle of feet.

He bade Tom and Doctor be ready to slip into their places and grapple their oars, to pull ahead, and perhaps to stern a trifle; the last said with an effort to make light of that part of the evolution. Not a man was allowed to turn his head forward to look at the whale. Crawford and Buntline well knew that this precaution was not meant for them, only for the two greenhorns. Old Ben watched the doctor like a surly mastiff, growling audibly if the young fellow but moved his head, ready to slap him if he stole but a glimpse of the forbidden beast.

They soon drew near enough to hear the spout of the still unconscious whale, and began to catch a sniff of that never-to-be-forgotten odor of the leviathan — a pleasant mixture of sea-weed and fish-smell — a fine tonic for quaking hearts.

The mate now stepped down on to the stern-sheets, and gave the closest attention to his steering oar. His lips were tightly compressed, so tight that they were bloodless and ashy pale. The blue pupils of his gray eyes were dilated to the utmost — like the enamored eyes of a lover — but there the parity ends, for their expression was most savage and furious; that of one stealing with deadly intent upon his victim. His orders were spoken low and briefly: —

"Get to your places all of you. Are you ready, John?"

"Ready, sir!" answered the big-hearted boat-steerer, in the tones of a kindred spirit.

"Put your irons in well forward, boy; you know why." The two brave souls exchanged glances, which expressed whole volumes to such men.

"Ay, ay, sir!"

"Doctor, keep your eyes on me. Buntline, chuck him overboard on the instant if he looks forward." There was not a whit of softening in the mate's tone or expression as he gave this murderous order. A cramped oar at such times is a matter of life or death.

"I'll do't, sir; and Doc wul think ar bigger whale than swallered Jonah has got 'im," said Ben, with a comical leer in his eye.

"Ease your sheet, Bob! Stand by to tauten it when I luff. And let go by the run when I tell you."

"Ay, ay, sir!"

"Take your oars in hand, all but Bob."

The boat spun through the water like a frolicsome porpoise, when the sheet was slacked. A nice ear could now hear the gurgling swash of the sea on the whale's back. The boat shot over the starboard corner of the flukes, at the risk of being sent skyward. Then, at the given word, Bob drew his sheet flat aft, and the mate lifted his steering oar from the water, causing the boat to come leaping into the wind, doubling round the great hump, and reaching well forward on the whale.

"Now! John, take him as he rises. — Let fly the sheet! Bob, take your oar. — In with the other iron! Well done! — Hold the boat! Stern all. Roll up the sail. Peak the oars and wet the line."

Up went the great flukes, cutting and slashing through the air; crashing down on the foamy sea, and flashing in the sunlight above the boat, drenching the crew to the skin. During a full minute the men cowered and held their breath while they sterned; listening as for the footsteps of Death, while they watched for the

crash of cedar, and waited for the sensation of a broken head.

At length the earthquake ceased to reverberate on the water and the thunderbolts ended above their heads. The whale went down with the noisy rush of a maelstrom, leaving six panting, breathless men sitting in water above the thwarts. The whale sounded quickly, switching out the line with a jerk and a twang, which made the boat sway and tremble; dipping her bow under the sea as if she were wrestling with a giant. The refreshing odor of whale was replaced by the smell of smoke from the logger-head, which was burned in black spiral bands by the swiftly surging line.

After taking out a hundred fathoms of line the whale ceased sounding, wheeled to windward, and ran at top speed just under the surface. Faster and faster the enraged beast tore along, cleaving the combing seas through a milky way of foam; running until there curved up a thin sheet of glassy water from the bows, high above the bowman's head, — a foam-crested curtain which extended back to the bow thwart. The effect of the sunlight on this azure screen was to spangle the boat and her crew with all the hues of the rainbow.

In front of the sharp bow there jetted a sun-gilded bur-wave, feathered out at the top with floating bubbles and drops of flashing spoondrift, iridescent as diamonds, a picture of graceful curves and blended colors never to be forgotten.

Over the busy waters of all the wide world nothing could be more beautiful, more magnificent, than that flying boat with her water-wings gemmed with prismatic

hues, and the creamy burwave reaching far forward of the prow, like the milk-white neck of a swan. So swiftly were the blue seas cleft by the stem that the waters hissed and seethed where the sharp bow passed, as if riven with a hot iron.

At length the oars had to be shipped in and the men gathered aft, sufficient to lighten the bow and lift it above the flying spume of the inrolling waves. Looking and wondering, the excited crew watched to trim the boat as she careened quickly from side to side, and dipped and rose when meeting the unequal seas.

The stern look on the mate's face had softened into an aspect of keen satisfaction and pride. With folded arms he stood balancing in the middle of the boat, communing with himself; a picture of vigorous manhood, made glorious by the strength and courage required to meet the deadly combat which he knew awaited him. Whatever his thoughts, they mantled his mobile features with a triumphant smile, — as one who contemplates the end of a well won victory.

Hoogley, too, seemed to enjoy the swift dash through the sparkling brine; his black, Malay eyes gleamed like a vulture's, as he girded his loins for the coming battle with the fiendish whale. John was proud of the confidence the mate reposed in him, and ready to face any form of danger if his young officer was there to lend a guiding hand.

As yet not one of the crew mistrusted that they were fast to the Albion's fighting whale, which had stoven her boats and killed so many men. Old Tom took occasion to show his appreciation of the novel scene: —

"Well, greenhorns, what duz yer think o' ther life uv ar jolly whaleman? This am what yer may call ar 'Nantucket sleigh-ride.' See the snow fly! Hear the bells ring!"

"Ay, ay," said old Ben, who echoed every sentiment of Tom's. "Who wouldn't be ar bully whaler an' ride arter sich ar team; speedin' up ar mile ar minute; an' no milestones ter tumble up the road, wid yer p'ints o' ther compass painted on um."

Nevertheless, there were two young hearts beating as they had never beaten before. They had not yet gotten over the shock of the first onset, where they were subjected to a free bath, without the choice of whether it should be hot or cold. They both sat terrified and spellbound, requiring harsh orders to insure their attention to trimming boat: especially the dandy little Esculapius, who wished himself anywhere else but in that boat. Neither of these pretty young boobies was a natural craven; but they had taken an oar in the wrong boat, and became dismayed at the too great familiarity of Death, when he was seen whisking about on the tail of an ugly whale.

The speed of the boat now slackened, and the line began to trend more to the surface. The mate at once took his position in the bow and prepared for action.

"There he slacks line. There he comes up, boys. Go to your thwarts, ship out your oars, and clap on and haul line."

Such were the brisk orders of the mate as he took his position, unhooked two lances and placed them in the crotch, ready for use. The whale had been running half an hour, taking the boat four miles to windward of the

ship, when he turned and ran three miles back to leeward, slowing up near where the boats were pulling up to meet him.

Raymond hoped that the brisk run and deep sound of the brute would induce him to lie quiet long enough for them to lance him. The whale came up nearest the waist-boat, and Braybrook prepared to take him head and head, as he came slowly down before the wind. Twice the great beast turned cautiously to the right or left, and rolled up his fierce red eyes to the surface to get a look at the fast boat, which was then fifty fathoms astern in his wake. He did not appear to see the loose boat which was directly ahead of him. Braybrook pulled up and lay waiting for the whale to approach; and when very near, he sheered off the boat and pulled past the head, seeking a good square dart at his life.

The monster was just then thrusting his head up to spout. Morey drew back, iron in hand, ready to dart the instant the whale's body emerged above water; when the startled beast discovered the boat abreast of his eye. The quiet spout he had begun to eject was suddenly snorted out like the blast of a trumpet. Rolling quickly over on his side, he made a swift under-cut with his jaw, and severed the boat amidship; cutting big Antonio's body in two. Braybrook, and the stroke and tub oars-men were sent flying in their half of the boat fifty feet out ahead: while Morey's half of the wreck filled and lay awash near the whale's eye.

The bow half of the boat now attracted the whale's attention. With an angry movement he flung up his head and crashed it down on the wreck, leaving nought but

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floating splinters. Morey and Pico, the bow oarsman, were seen swimming away toward the bow-boat, which had pulled up to rescue Braybrook and the survivors of his crew. The whale pitched and went down about fifty fathoms, and lay sulking for half an hour. Mr. Bailey then sought to pick up the dead body, but it sank before he could reach it. Gathering up the oars, paddles, whale craft and floating line, the bow-boat pulled away for the ship with the remains of the waist-boat.

This was indeed a sad event to mar the Fleetwing's prospective victory. When the larboard boat fastened to the whale, Braybrook gnashed his teeth with rage. It made the iron enter his very soul to think of its being Raymond's ninth whale, and not one could yet be counted to the waist-boat. With such ungenerous feelings, Braybrook took the suicidal risk of a head-and-head encounter in hot haste to place his boat where Morey could kill the whale of his young rival, and detract somewhat from his glory.

All whalemen know the recklessness of meeting a fighting whale by the head, unless both boat and whale are meeting at great speed. The jaw is a cachalot's chief defence, and he becomes very efficient in its use. No one knew this better than Braybrook, and his taking such risk to gratify revenge showed the ferocious courage of the man.

The whale came up breaching, flinging his vast length nearly out of water; displaying the Albion's two lines — as well as the Fleetwing's — dangling from his body while he poised in air. Breaching with starboard side to windward, he plainly showed the *three white stripes* of Norman's

demon whale to the boat's crew, as well as to all on board the ship — which lay near by taking in the wrecked crew. A feeling of horror ran through the heart of every beholder. Crawford was the first to break the news to his shipmates: —

"Duz yer see thet ere, sir? By the howly Pater! thet's Mocha Dick, what we uns hev hooked to," and the startled veteran looked to his young officer for further clew to his discourse.

"Well, what of it?" cried the mate, testily, with a touch of severity in his tone, never before used to his brave old shipmate. "Why, Tom, did you and I ever hook to a whale that we couldn't master?"

"Durned ar bit uv it, sir. An' if yer sez ther word, we uns wul jist scalp ther case off uv this un too."

"Spoken like a man, Tom. I knew that you and Ben would lend a hand at any little job of this kind. Ha, Buntline?"

"True ez ther gospel, sir. You must 'member thet it wuz we uns what taught yer ter tackle enything waggin' ar fin or ar fluke," and Ben bristled up like a turkey gobbler, to show his zeal.

"Face forward, then, all of you, and haul line."

Tom, Ben, and Bob obeyed the order cheerfully, and sent the boat spinning over the sea after the whale, which was jogging slowly off to leeward. The Doctor sat irresolute and dazed, his white face fixed on the ship, something as a dying man takes his last look at the sun. But a violent slap on the back from old Ben was sufficient to induce the young medico to wheel about and make a dumb show of hauling line.

Something ominous about the whale's action led the mate to watch him closely while the line was being gathered in. The green hands were not enough experienced in angling for such monsters to read the ill omens, but they came to a better knowledge of such things before the fight was over.

Even the scared little M. D. noticed that the mate peeled to his shirt and rolled up his sleeves, intent upon some savage job of butchery; and that he stopped to button his pea-jacket round the harponier thwart, and nodded to Hoogley to secure everything under the stern-sheets, as a man becomes very careful of his watch when about to be drowned. The mate's doings could not but seem portentous even to the knowing ones. Further observations were interrupted by Raymond's orders for for active work: —

"Haul line lively, men! John, coil away carefully; no kinks in your line, for there's fun ahead."

"Ay, sir," said Tom, "ther cretur snorts like ar mad bull at er Lima bull-fight, an' snaps his spout-holes like ar jib-sheet in ar squall."

"Him is spilin' fur ar fight, an' he's big 'nough ter show ar good tussle," said old Ben.

"Well, my lads," replied the mate, "we must fix him at once, before he coaxes himself into a squabble."

"Thet's so, sir," joined in Hoogley. "His old gray head is scarred by many a battle. He's a deep feller, too, Mr. Raymond, an' wants ar long lance to tickle his gizzard."

"You're right, John. And we must get well for'ard for that work — well up to the bunch of his neck, for a square

set. Haul, men; haul like thunder!" The mate grew impatient to come to blows.

Nearer and nearer the boat approached the suspicious whale, until his angry spoutings quickened the heart-beats of the crew, and visions of fighting whales and stoven boats crowded tumultuously upon the memory of all. Seeing that the heart-barometer of his men was falling, Raymond's voice grew sharp and stern in giving orders, which served to withdraw their attention from the appalling danger they were about to encouter.

"Avast hauling! Now, boys, face round to your oars, — all but Tom. Crawford, my lad, you and I can master this chap, any day."

"Count on we uns, sir, ez long ez there's ar plank ter float on," replied the brawny fellow.

"Hoogley, take your oar and sheer us well clear of his flukes. There's shoal water over the suspicious things, and we must give them a little leeway."

"Ay, ay, sir!"

When all was ready, Raymond lifted the line from the chock and passed it to Crawford, who took it to the bow cleat on the port side, ready to haul upon.

"Now, Tom, buckle to your work!" And Crawford's strong arms sent the boat ahead with a bound, making a wide curve round the flukes, which were cunningly sweeping from side to side, feeling about for his coming foe. As the boat rounded the hump and shot forward, Raymond poised his lance ready for a plunge into the monster.

But the watchful whale caught sight of the bow, which had made too wide a circuit, and he shot ahead, jetting

forth his spout with the tearing noise of escaping steam. Plunging under water, he took out fifty fathoms of line, and the mate thought he was gone for a while ; but he wheeled about on the back track, and came breaching out directly for the boat.

The mighty creature leaped so high out of water that, for an instant, complete suspension took place before the vast bulk came tumbling back to the sea. While the dark mass hung between the boat and the sun, it hurtled down the blackest shadow ever cast by Death.

Seeing that the line had slackened, Raymond fortunately gave orders to stern before the whale appeared. When he breached, Raymond and Tom sprang to their oars, though both confessed that they expected to be crushed into a shapeless mass.

But it was Hoogley who saved the lives of all. With some quick, strong sweeps of his steering-oar, aided by Tom's lusty back strokes, John swung the boat round parallel with the falling whale, which came crashing down on the blades of the trailing oars, just clear of the gunwale. Up went a whole ocean of water, seething and roaring into a mountain of foam. Then down came the uplifted fountain, filling the boat till she was sunk wholly under the sea, coming up with her gunwales just awash.

Every soul was dashed to the bottom of the boat by the tons of falling water. Bob and the Doctor so fully believed themselves crushed to pulp by the whale that they made no effort for rescue. But the avalanche subsided, and the God-given sun looked down upon six water-soaked wretches, two of whom were so palsied with fright that they still lay face down in the water.

Buntline caught up one of the half-drowned boys and Hoogley the other, each holding up his limp specimen to the sun by the nape of the neck, as a cat lifts her kittens. The boys soon disgorged their inward cargo of water, though the deckload soaked into their clothes was not so easily got rid of. While all were puffing and blowing like porpoises, the mate was the first to speak: —

"Steady, my lads. Steady the boat, and keep her upright. Bail like devils, for there's more fun coming. Overboard with a buoy on the quarter, Hoogley. I'll put one on the port side."

"Oh, Mr. Raymond! please don't take us near that whale again," called out the demoralized M. D., recovering his puny voice after vomiting up a pailful of brine. This appeal brought forth a roar of laughter from the four saline souls, and the mate shouted with cheery voice: —

"Bail quick, all of you. Why, lads, there's some glory in tackling a turbulent fellow of this kind. Doctor, take your hat and bail out the boat, you blue monkey! We'll clip the chap's parvagum, and hold a post-mortem on him yet." This was said while the officers were securing the two sealskin buoys to the gunwales, to prevent the waterlogged boat rolling over.

The whale had settled under water after his lofty tumble, and lay projecting another attack. He came up a little way from the boat before she was half bailed out, but, instead of resuming the offensive, started briskly off to leeward. He was in a watchful, surly mood, judging from his spiteful way of spouting, the nervous wiggle of his hump, and his cautious method of running on a devi-

ous course — first, a-starboard and then a-port — at which times he would roll up his fierce black eyes to the surface, glaring about like a couchant tiger, ready to spring upon the first comer.

The moment the boat was free from water, the men were put to the line, without giving time to wring out their wet clothes; for the captain and third mate were coming up fast under oars and sail, meaning to take a hand in killing the whale.

After the boat had hauled up close in the rear of the whale, Raymond held up his hand to stop hauling; and still he did not bid the men take their oars as before. He was contemplating some desperate deed, and taking his own time to do it. With an imperious motion he waved for the loose boats to keep back out of the way, and not disturb the whale. The captain took the hint, peaked his oars and followed on under easy sail. Probably Hoogley caught the mate's plan from previous remarks, and what he now said in low tones: —

"Let the nervous beast quiet down a bit, and forget we are here. The boats are at hand to pick us up if we need 'em. So, John, we'll use no oars this time, but go straight to the mark. Hug him close — 'wood and blackskin' — and give me a set before he can see us."

Raymond's manner was always stern and severe when about a whale. But now the muscles of his neck were corded, his veins beaded, and the expression of his face was made almost savage by the terrible energy revealed in his eyes. Turning to the boat-steerer, he asked in a whisper: —

"Are you ready for a dash?"

"All ready, sir," was Hoogley's quiet reply; though John was as tigerish at such times as the mate, and loved danger as well.

"Then ship in the oars, and grapple the line, every soul of you." Raymond caught up his lance and braced himself to use it. "Now, John, lay off just enough to clear his small, but not an inch to spare. Haul, the rest of you, like devils! Haul, I tell you, till the *iron-pole hangs at the head of the boat!*"

There was a ring of triumph in the mate's words, that imparted something of his own dauntless courage to the most timid in the boat. It was the language of a man willing to peril his own life in a brave act, and who demanded a show of courage in others.

Caught upon the top of a rising sea, the boat ran quickly over the flukes — though the corners were curled up nervously on both sides of the boat as she passed — slipped along the small, past the hump, and the next moment the *iron-pole was hanging at the chocks;* then down went the long keen lance into the life of the monster.

Raymond stood transfixed with joy as he saw the blood belching forth from the spiracle of the mighty cachalot. A yell of delight came from the boats near at hand. And a lustier, louder shout came from the distant ship, in which a falsetto of feminine voices was faintly distinguished.

Not a sound had the savage beast heard as the swift boat approached. Not until he felt the chill imparted by the cold steel piercing his lung and entering his heart, did he know that his foe was upon him. The whale's

fins quivered and stiffened at a right angle, stopping his headway on the instant. A swift tremor ran through him; its muscular contraction bending the lance into several waving curves; an unfailing evidence that the heart was reached.

Rallying for a last courageous attempt to defend himself, he thrust out his vast head till his bloodshotten eyes came to the surface. When he caught sight of the boat, something of his old strength returned for the moment. Flinging his jaw wide-open, the whale made a swift cut just at the head of the boat, thrashing down upon the sea in futile attempt to crush the murderous hand that had dealt him the blow.

The whale's rolling movement lifted the bow out of water, and compelled Raymond to slack line, and stern briskly away, to escape the great harrow flashing above his head. Failing to reach the boat, the dying monster "milled" round and round in a small circle, feeling for the boat with his flukes, and biting snappishly at the passing shadow of an albatross, which scented the blood, and swooped down very near to feed upon the clots as they fell.

It was the whale's last effort to show fight. He headed slowly off to leeward with a red flag in his spout, and in about half an hour rolled up dead.

Mr. Bailey pulled up, and, at the mate's request, cut a hole for the fluke-rope, and took charge of the dead whale. Raymond pulled aboard, that himself and crew might get out of their wet clothes as soon as possible. The nervous strain had taxed them all to the utmost, and they looked worn and haggard, and felt tired and hungry.

After the whale was chained alongside, the two lines belonging to the Albion were hooked to, hauled aboard, and coiled on the bottoms of the spare boats overhead. Her four irons were also cut out, to verify the fact that the prize was really Captain Norman's demon whale.

Tears were in Mrs. Talbert's eyes when she greeted Raymond at table, as she exclaimed:—

"Oh, you reckless man! I hope that you took time to thank God, soon as you changed your wet clothes, for saving yourself and crew from that awful creature."

"I never let wet clothes prevent my attending to that duty on the spot. I returned thanks while I was punching my lance into the life of that old beast," replied Raymond, reverently.

"After all," said the captain, "it's worth while to get a ducking now and then, to learn how much people think of us. When the whale breached, your boat disappeared for a time under the falling water; and, thinking you were crushed, I hailed the deck to say that you were all killed. The wail that went up from the female community was pretty near worth dying for."

"Of course it was an awful shock to us," chimed in both ladies.

"Yes," continued the captain, "but when I saw the boat was afloat, and hurried down to go and pick up the crew, the ladies were wringing their hands and making a big uproar, and were not willing to believe you were alive in a stoven boat. I'll certainly try Mr. Raymond's plan some time, to get an estimate of my value in this community."

"No, Daniel, I guess you don't need to do that at present," pleaded Mrs. Talbert.

"I should think, after Mr. Braybrook's accident, you might have let that terrible creature alone," said Miss Allston, whose flushed face and sparkling eyes implied that she had withdrawn from the rank of mourners, and was now prepared to erect a triumphal arch to commemorate the final glorious deed.

"A whaleman doesn't give up the game because of a stoven boat," replied the mate; at the same time tucking in a juicy piece of roast pig, which Mrs. Talbert had ordered cooked in his honor the instant she saw the whale spouting blood.

"How did the Doctor behave on this first occasion?" asked Braybrook, always intent upon some malicious topic, and heartily sick of hearing so much praise in his young rival's favor.

"I have a faint recollection that Doctor was a little absent-minded at times, probably thinking of the post-mortem he would make on the whale," said the mate, willing to spare the young medico, who looked greatly abashed and crest-fallen at the turn of the conversation.

So the dinner hour passed. A feast of reason, as well as roast pig and plum duff, for all but Braybrook, whose heart was cankered to the core by continuation of his ill luck.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE HIDDEN HISTORY OF "TIMOR TOM."

IT was several days before Braybrook got over his wrathy mood. He had lost his pet boat, built for him at extra expense; one of the owner's many perquisites which induced him to ship as second officer in the Fleetwing. The new boat was expected to outpull all others; and those interested were greatly piqued when they found that the captain had ordered one built for the mate, which proved the fastest boat on board.

Braybrook's sad mishap awakened a general sympathy, which did much toward mollifying his ire. Captain Talbert gave him the choice of three new boats overhead; and Braybrook's selection proved good; for, on trial, the new boat was found to outpull the old one. This happy hit served to bring the turbulent officer into something approaching good humor again.

By judicious care in all their professional duties, Raymond avoided everything which might jar the temper of his surly subordinate; well knowing that no word of consolation would be received from him, as the suspicious nature of the man would lead him to deem it insincere.

After dinner, an hour's nooning was given the men; then all hands were called to cut in the whale. Bray-

brook and the ship-keepers had previously got everything ready for hooking on, when it was seen that the whale was spouting blood. Here was a much larger head to deal with than they had had before. The "case" would bail nearly twenty barrels.

When the blanket-pieces began to be flenced off from the middle and after parts of the body, Braybrook's cutting spade occasionally struck against the shanks of old irons found buried in the blubber. Six of these ancient iron shanks were saved — others slipped through into the body — which went to show that many another ship's boats had been fast and stoven in past years.

A harpoon thus left in a whale rusts off just beneath the outer surface of the blubber. The wound heals up, leaving a hard white cicatrice large as the hand, to show where the barb entered. The shank of the iron is rusted off by the corroding effect of sea-water, which eats the iron down to a long tapering point, while all parts fairly within the blubber are preserved intact forever.

The extracted harpoons were not all marked, but the names of four ships, with dates, were found cut on the heads of a like number of irons. And, strange to say, the name of the old ship Herald was found among the marked irons, a vessel to which Captain Talbert belonged at the time — twenty years before. And another, the Sea Lion, in which Uncle Joe had steered a boat forty years before; though not at the time corresponding to the date on her iron.

The date found on the Herald's iron was 1827. This date corresponded with the captain's recollection of a whale fight in the Indian Ocean at that time. The

Herald had been cruising with good success off Timor Island. At length, late one afternoon, they raised a big whale which spouted seventy times, and everybody was elated with the promise of catching a very large whale.

The mate's boat approached the whale carefully, and fastened. The third mate pulled up to strike him, and was knocked to pieces in an instant, and had three men killed. The second mate picked up the living ones of the wrecked crew and pulled to the ship. The captain lowered to help the mate, got stoven and had his leg broken. This compelled the mate to cut loose, and save the captain and his crew. Though the whale hung round till dark, chewing the stoven boats to pieces, no further effort was made to take him. Having no spare boats, the ship put away for Batavia, where the captain's leg was attended to, and new boats procured.

It was considered, at the time of their accident, that they had hooked to the famous Timor Tom. Two months after, an English ship fastened to the same whale, off Bally; had two boats stoven and some men killed, and gave up the chase. This ship subsequently met the Herald, and, upon hearing her story, declared that they recognized the Herald's iron-pole, and the position of the harpoon — just under the hump.

The English ship's name — Lord Nelson — did not correspond with any of the names found on the irons of Raymond's whale; her iron was probably one of those which had worked through into the body. Of the two harpoons not marked, one was of French make, and the other was believed to be a Dutch iron, such as the Bremerhaven ships used at that time.

Uncle Joe declared that the Fleetwing's whale was not Mocha Dick. He described the head of the real demon whale as being all white, and immensely larger than this Timor Tom's. It was cause for great rejoicing, their having rid the ocean of such a murderous monster as this, and Raymond could not but feel well satisfied with his share of the capture.

When the boiling was completed, the ship was headed toward Fayal under full press of sail. The whale had turned out one hundred and thirty-seven barrels of oil. This made their full catch amount to six hundred and fifty-seven barrels. On the following day, the ship ran into Horta and dropped anchor near the freightship, which, fortunately, had not yet made up her cargo.

It was a source of annoyance to all to find the Albion in port, as no one of the Fleetwing's people wished ever to see her again. She had taken a sixty-barrel bull, and ran into port to ship the oil home. Her boats had got fast to two whales; one boat got smashed and lost the whale, and Captain Norman was now in quest of another boat.

The Fleetwing ran down across the Albion's stern, and Captain Talbert hailed as he passed; finding Norman was on shore, he asked the mate to send a boat to the Fleetwing to get the two lines and the irons taken from Timor Tom; not wishing to retain anything belonging to such an unlucky ship; and at heart having a good deal of sympathy for such an unfortunate set of people.

The oil-casks were becketed by the coopers while the captain was ashore at the custom-house, getting a trans-shipping permit. When this was obtained, the oil was

briskly rafted, and towed to the home-bound vessel. A mail-bag with home letters was taken to the consul's; then the Fleetwing lifted her anchor and put to sea.

When fairly clear of Pico, they steered southeast for another thorough look about the St. Michael ground, where they had been so successful.

Day after day the ship cruised over the blue reaches of sea where they had found whales so plentiful, without further success. At the end of ten days the ship was steered for St. Michael, to land Dr. Greeville, and give the men a day's liberty before they stretched out into the Atlantic. Late one afternoon they ran the ship in and anchored in the open roadstead off Ponta Delgada, which is the chief port of St. Michael, and has about fifteen thousand inhabitants; the harbor being too shallow for the Fleetwing to enter.

After the ship had been made snug, the cabin people gathered about the taffrail, to watch the lighthouse and the glittering lights along the shore, and plan for an early visit to Ponta on the coming day. The doctor was to leave them for the purpose of trying the hot sulphur springs of Furnas, which are remedial for palsy, rheumatism, and scrofula; and, possibly, with a hope that the beautiful island, with its rare fruits and fabulous springs, might take pallor from his face, and the tremor from his nerves, caused by nerve-shock during his dreadful encounter with "T. T." as Timor Tom had come to be abbreviated in the presence of the nervous young medico.

As usual, Miss Allston importuned the mate to tell them something about the island before they landed; as nothing suited her better than to induce the young

officer to talk upon almost any subject, when they were thrown together.

"Come, Mr. Raymond, here is a pause in the clatter of tongues. Please tell us something about St. Michael."

"Yes, do tell us all you can think of about what we are to see to-morrow," added Mrs. Talbert.

"I don't think I am half as well posted in the matter as Dr. Greeville," replied Raymond, willing to give the languid young fellow opportunity to entertain Miss Allston, for whom and to whom he had expressed abundant admiration.

"Oh, sir, I am only posted on the thermal qualities of the Caldeiras, and the medicinal effect of the sulphur baths; both of which I desire to test as a constitutional neurotic. You will find me as interested as the ladies in whatever you have to relate."

"Well, then, here goes. San Miguel, or, as the English call it, St. Michael, is the largest and most important of the Azores, and has a population of 105,000, mostly Portuguese, but with many English, negroes, and Moors.

"Its highest peak, which we saw far to the east, is three thousand five hundred and seventy feet above sea-level, and connects with a central ridge that runs the whole length of the island. There are several truncated craters along this ridge, one of which contains a rumbling lake of boiling mud, that sometimes is cast up in roaring fountains, but rarely overflows the crater edge. Some of the extinct craters are filled with lakes of clear drinkable water, from which streams flow down to the sea.

"Hot sulphur springs abound in the valley of Furnas. There are also numerous boiling fountains, called Caldeiras; some of which throw up water twelve feet high, so hot that most of it vanishes in vapor. There is a variety of mineral qualities found in these hot springs, yet sulphur predominates in most of them. Strange to say, cold springs are often found side by side with the hot ones. The doctor can tell you more about their therapeutic qualities than I can; though I once convinced myself that the cold baths are less apt to scald you than the hot ones — as one of the latter once came near cooking me to a turn.

"While Flores and Corvo never experience earthquake shocks, this island has been visited by many violent volcanic convulsions. To mention one of many: in 1522, Villa Franca, a town farther to the east, then the capital of the island, was wholly buried, and its six thousand inhabitants were destroyed.

"We shall find birds here in countless numbers, though the government yearly pays for the destruction of hundreds of thousands, as they are very destructive to fruits and grain-fields. Many of these birds are blown from the African coast during storms. Among the native game birds is the finely flavored woodcock, and the delicious red partridge, which we will test at dinner tomorrow. Rabbits are plentiful, but not well nourished; so that cats are more apt to be served, being deemed good enough for a heretic foreigner.

"A superior quality of oranges and grapes is grown here. They are raised from trees and vines planted in artificial furrows blasted and chiselled in the soft volcanic

rock. This peculiar lava-soil imparts great luxuriance to all kinds of vegetation. But the crude methods of pulverizing the rock are so laborious that no great amount of these rare products is exported; these fruits are mostly consumed by the numerous invalids resident here, coming from Lisbon and England.

"Now, ladies, I must be excused, for it is time I should write up my log." The mate bowed himself out of all further talk for that night, his secret motive being that he had a letter to write to his darling Mamie, which could be mailed in the English steamer the next day, — the last opportunity, perhaps, for a long time to send to home friends.

As the larboard watch had the first day's liberty, the captain and mate both accompanied the ladies ashore at Ponta Delgada. Raymond was to be their only escort about town, as the captain would be occupied entering his ship at the custom-house, purchasing recruits to last round Cape Horn, and shipping a seaman at the consulate to take the place of dead Antonio.

There were several notable churches which the ladies wished to visit. Some ancient and moss-grown with the attrition of centuries; others modern and interesting, of real architectural beauty. The streets of the town are regular, broad, and straight. Most of the houses are built of stone, made dazzling to the eye by whitewash. Quaint one-ox vehicles were perambulating about the streets, having massive, wooden, spokeless wheels, which claimed the privilege of all greaseless go-carts, to creak and groan to their hearts' content.

The party dined at the principal hotel, having previously

ordered a game dinner for mid-afternoon, and would have enjoyed their palatable meal but for the everlasting stench of garlic in the stews eaten by others around them. The markets of the place were well stocked with a good variety of fruits, so that the dessert added much to the gustatory pleasure of their dinner.

Sailors from the Fleetwing were frequently seen galloping about the town in high glee. Some of the noble Jacks, having become slightly elevated from drinking the vile arrack of the place, had been tricked into riding lean, lank horses, which required a Portuguese lad to go behind with a sharp stick to spur the tottering beast, lest he fall by the wayside.

With greater show of sagacity, some of the agile horse-boys ran ahead of their equine skeletons, dangling a tuft of grass, a turnip, or a cabbage, from a stick, coaxing the hungry beasts to follow by the oft-repeated promise of a sumptuous meal if the limping animal survived the journey. It often required considerable diplomacy to induce these inebriate sailors to believe that they were really riding upon the most spirited steeds of the place. At such times an additional glass of arrack was found a good expenditure to convince a drunken sailor of the beauty and speed of his horse.

There were a few well mounted Jacks — sailors with copper-lined rum-lockers, such as Crawford and Buntline, who, having first choice from the collective livery of the town, secured passable animals. These gallant tars, not having imbibed sufficient arrack to blot out the lubber point of the compass, managed to steer their own craft, and tend their own jib-sheets. The only danger of total

wreck was presented at the outskirts of the town, where these worthies were compelled to tack, or wear ship, for the purpose of occasionally coming to anchor at the grog-shops. And as even horses are found to be the fleetest when homeward bound, woe to the razor-backed hogs, or tethered goats, which then got athwart their hawse while under full sail, and running with free sheets down some of the water-side streets of the town.

Several of the Portuguese from the Fleetwing were natives of Ponta. These took it upon themselves to feast their Yankee shipmates bountifully. Even old Tom, who had thrashed two of their number the first night out from home, was now sumptuously entertained, and toasted in many a bumper as the hero of the forecastle; thus even a rude, illiterate sailor makes just distinction between a bully, who fights for the love of it, and a big-fisted bruiser who breaks your head because of your little error in drawing a knife or stealing his grub.

A bushel of the lava-raised oranges was given to Tom when he went aboard, and the pretty wife of his Portuguese host kissed the old hero with an amount of zeal and grace which showed her appreciation of the man who had prevented her drunken husband from murdering his shipmates. Thus one cannot quite decide whether the oranges were given as a peace-offering, or as a token of Tom's even-handed justice when knocking down a Portuguese or ruling over other little broils in his autocratic kingdom.

Late in the afternoon, Captain Talbert joined the party, ready to go aboard. Raymond signalled the ship for a boat, and about an hour before sunset the merry group

were pulled on board, tired, but well satisfied with their day's pastime. While rowing to the ship, Miss Allston expressed admiration for the exquisite robin's-egg blue of the water, and importuned Raymond for an explanation of the phenomenon.

"Please tell me, what *is* the cause of this wonderful blueness of the sea?"

"It is not well determined. But the current theory, that it is derived from the fine particles of river-silt brought down by the Mississippi, and dispersed over the ocean by the Gulf Stream, — especially about the Bermudas and Azores, — is not well substantiated."

"Oh, that's a good reason, I'm sure. Now tell me what makes those discolored streaks upon most of the cliffs along the shore. I have noticed them at Flores, Fayal, and Pico."

"Well done! You have now suggested a grave matter for future generations to consider. Contrary to what is taking place along the western Atlantic shores, these mid-ocean islands are steadily emerging from the sea, lifted up from their base by the constant upheaval of the great plateau beneath. The Bermudas and Bahamas are being slowly submerged; the former have already sunk two thousand feet, as proved by the coral bottom found at more than that depth, while it will not grow in water more than one hundred and fifty feet deep."

"Dear me!" and the ladies looked alarmed at the distant probability of their American home tumbling into the sea.

So they chatted about trivial and serious things which attracted the girl's attention. She was forever seeking

some plausible pretext to fix her rapt, admiring gaze upon her companion when they were together. This prattling habit of Asenith's was not objectionable to Raymond, though he was of a brooding, reflecting nature. The amiable fellow had acquired a semi-consciousness that the bright, beautiful girl had gradually endeared herself to him, but not in the way she thought and hoped to. The romantic sailor liked to have Miss Allston impersonate his loved Mary Tudor; and he would talk to the present girl as he could have talked to the dear absent one had she been there.

But this was a view which his girl companion never had taken of their delightful chit-chats. That which in the beginning was but a flitting thought, light as gossamer, in the girl's mind, — a sweet feminine morsel, such as all maidens indulge in for a moment's pastime, — had lured Miss Allston so often, and been harbored by her so long, that her embryo conception of a sailor lover had now become a full-fledged aspiration — winged for any ethereal flight acquired by accepted lovers.

Thrown as Miss Allston had been into daily contact with a man of such strong personality, the hourly growth of her affection for Raymond had stolen almost imperceptibly upon her, viewless as the meridian noon steals upon the new-born day. True, the girl made exceptional advances on the occasions of Raymond's display of heroism in whale-killing, occasions which lured the girl's affection wholly beyond recall.

Late in the evening, after writing up his log, the mate came on deck, and found Braybrook sitting on the midship rail, smoking; he was reclining at his ease against

the main-swifter, and Raymond might well suppose he was in his usual snappish mood. The mate compelled himself to speak the usual "Good evening" courtesy, and was surprised to find something unusually social in the tone of Braybrook's greeting. This induced Raymond to tarry in his walk, and half reluctantly take a seat on the rail beside his subordinate.

The quick intuitions of the mate were not ill grounded. As truthful as the polarity of a compass is the human voice when its tones awaken compassion in the heart of another. Without wasting a moment in prelusive talk, Braybrook at once came to the mooted point, his bitter enmity toward his young rival. To Raymond's question: —

"Going ashore to-morrow, I suppose, Mr. Braybrook?"

"Yes, sir, I'm going ashore. But whether I ever come aboard again, remains with you"; said with a tremor of sadness in his voice, almost like the sob of a person weighed down with sorrow.

Raymond's sympathy was awakened at once, as by the cry of a drowning man: —

"Why, Braybrook! What do you mean?"

"I mean, sir, that I find myself a useless appendage aboard of this ship. Every soul in the cabin looks upon me with suspicion; and the ladies never address their conversation to me. *You* hold me to my duty with a curb-bit, as a Spaniard bridles his mule. I was shipped here for a purpose, but I'm not equal to the task put upon me; you all see that; and I had better step down and out of this craft. And if you say the word, sir, I'll do it!" And the tears broke loose from this fierce man's eye, as

from a grieved woman's. It smote Raymond to the heart; and he laid his soul bare to his hated rival: —

"Oh, Braybrook, don't say that. There's no man more needed here than you — always excepting Captain Talbert. There is no one but yourself to blame for your social position. You seized upon your present hateful isolation the hour you came aboard, and you have clung to it as if you preferred to keep us all aloof. Now tell me what's in your mind, and you sha'n't regret it."

"Do you know what the owners shipped me to do here?"

"Yes, they shipped you because you are a good whaleman, and a prime officer," replied Raymond, willing to let his crushed rival believe that was the extent of his knowledge.

"That isn't the way I put it. The damned hypocrites lured me into this ship to do the whaling, they said, — 'Joe Bailey and me.' The lying hounds confessed you were a good officer, but hadn't much experience with whales; when the fact is neither Joe Bailey nor I either can hold a candle to you — the best day we ever saw"; and the angry officer pounded the rail with his huge fist, to demonstrate how he would pummel the dissembling agent if he had him in hand.

"Oh, that isn't so, Braybrook. I have simply had a spirt of good luck, and yours must follow; have no fear of that."

"Luck be hanged! I've seen something of whale-killing in my twenty years' experience; and never before saw a boat-header willing to ship in his oars and grapple a fighting whale with teeth and nails — as a tiger tackles a

bullock. I tell you, sir, mine is a kind of luck that shames me more than I can bear. It will consign me to a second mate's berth to the end of my days." There was almost a sob in the arrogant voice of the rough, stern man.

"Tell me squarely, Braybrook, what I can do to make you feel better about this matter?"

"Do, sir! Damn it, you can give me a chance to hook to a whale, and lighten this load of disgrace. Twenty years a spouter! and still heading the waist-boat, is hard for a man of my mettle to bear."

"Certainly! I will give you a chance to lead the whaling a few times; and I will keep back, that you may kill your own whale. But please don't ask to kill my whales, for I mean to kill my own whenever I can."

"No fear of your not killing your own, if you run amuck with 'em as you did with the last. I, for one, won't put my head where you do, if I never kill a whale."

"Well, Braybrook, shake hands and let us be friends. You have hated me from the moment we met, without just cause, and it has not worked well. Now let us begin anew. Promise to come straight to me with any difficulty which may arise between us, and I will right the wrong for you, at whatever cost."

"I'll do it. God bless you, Charlie Raymond! I saw you were the better man, when we met; but it has been durned hard to confess it, as you have seen."

And the two brave men clasped hands with a long, strong grip. Their very hearts were in the words they uttered when they promised to be rivals no more.

On the following day, the recruits were got off, and the

empty water-casks replenished, while Braybrook and his men were ashore. Late in the afternoon the starboard watch came aboard; and before dark the ship was underweigh, heading south for the "Steen Ground," a resort for sperm whales which is about nine hundred miles from the Azores.

CHAPTER XX.

DISCLOSING SOME SECRETS OF THE SEA.

IT was a pleasant evening without. Every drawing sail was set, and the ship was loitering along over the tranquil sea, going hand in hand with a breeze as indolent as herself.

Within the cabin there was a cheerful scene of home-life at sea, in keeping with the quiet night without. The swinging lamps were lighted, and swayed lazily to and fro in concert with the slow, easy roll of the vessel as she felt the gentle beam-swell rolling in from the east. This monotonous motion of the swaying lamplight made an incessant glitter, which flashed from every coigne and facet of glassware and metallic implement about the saloon.

The child lay sleeping in her bed, rocked back and forth to the gentle motion of the undulating sea. Her little face was rosy, flushed with excitement from the wild romp she had been indulged in before she knelt at her mother's knee to say her prayer. It was a sweet picture of innocence and purity and peace, accented by the dimpled hand and few flaxen curls seen hanging over the berth-board.

The ladies sat cosily sewing at the centre-table, chatting in low, confidential tones with each other as they busily

plied their needles. Miss Allston had been reading aloud, until the officers came in from the evening walk, when she laid aside her book and took up her needlework. The ladies had previously been indulged in their usual rubber of whist during the dog-watch, and made no further claim upon the gentlemen when they entered the saloon — for amusements, as well as duties, soon drop into a fixed routine on shipboard.

Captain Talbert and his favorite young officer sat on the port side of the centre-table, deeply occupied with their usual game of chess. It was the rubber game, and the wrinkled face of the kindly old man was aglow with excitement, as he studied out the projected move, with the queen's knight, which he thought would hamper the play of the mate. The captain had inadvertently touched his knight, as if about to play, but withdrew his hand for further reflection ; thus giving Raymond a coigne of vantage over his loved old skipper. At length, when the long-pondered move was made, the mate instantly responded, and called checkmate ! with a pardonable tone of triumph, considering the captain's prolonged study of his move.

" Ah, boy, you are always a little too much for the 'old man.' But I don't just see how you found that checkmate so quick."

" Why, sir, you got to fumbling your knight long before you moved him, so I looked out a move to match yours."

" The deuce I did ! Well, I didn't know it."

Lifting his eyes to the telltale, to notice the ship's course, the captain reached up to the chart-box and took down a chart of the North Atlantic; and speaking his thoughts aloud, the two officers began to discuss the prob-

abilities of seeing whales on the "Steen Ground," which the ship was slowly approaching.

"She still holds up to her south-southeast course," said the captain; and he unrolled and spread out his chart on the table, and took up his dividers and parallel rule to pick off the estimated distance made since the afternoon reckoning. "If the wind holds, another day's run like this will take us to the edge of Captain Steen's ground."

"Yes, I see it will," replied the mate, as he held open his side of the chart, and noted the display of whales' flukes pictured here and there over the ground, where whales had been seen on previous voyages. "But, captain, you are entering the ground a hundred miles to the eastward of every sign of whales, as indicated on the chart!" And he put his finger on the numerous pencil sketches of flukes more to the westward of the projected track.

"Very true, my son; but the whales we saw last voyage, and before, were all coming from the east, as you will remember." And he drew out his old log-book to verify his statement. "So I have purposely held my luff this time, meaning to cruise over the ground thoroughly, working off to the westward."

"Have you ever cruised as far east as this before?"

"No," replied the captain, curtly, showing an inclination to cut off further discussion of this point; which served to whet Raymond's curiosity all the more.

"Don't you think, sir, that whales are apt to confine themselves to narrow limits, when following an eddy along ocean currents?"

"Yes, that's what I have always taught you."

"Then why should you expect to find whales a hundred miles away from their usual haunts?"

"Young man, you are pushing me into about as tight a corner as you usually make for me in chess; and perhaps I might as well confide in you, first as last, that I am following out Mr. Bailey's directions in this matter."

"Indeed, sir!" said Raymond, with surprise, and a sense of shame for the acknowledged credulity of his old captain. "Does he expect to find Mocha Dick in the Atlantic Ocean?"

"No, not that I know of;" said with a little confusion at the dilemma he was caught in.

"And do you really mean to shape your courses during the voyage by Uncle Joe's superstitious notions?"

"Yes. I know from Captain Seabry himself that he made his last big voyage by following Joe Bailey's directions. And here is a letter from Captain Brown, of New London, which tells the same story."

"I am surprised to hear that, captain; I've never seen any good evidence of 'second-sight' before." And the mate's face flushed with a thrill of awe, at the thought of such a weird power being entrusted to any human being.

"The whales we have already taken were got by cruising where Uncle Joe advised, which is sufficient to confirm all I have ever heard about his wonderful power. But we had best keep this matter to ourselves for the present."

"Yes, you are right in that, sir. What a howl Braybrook would set up if he knew of this state of things. He is now cruelly sarcastic about Uncle Joe's piety, which to me is a beautiful element to have aboard."

"Don't you think Mr. Bailey is a dear old man?" que-

ried Mrs. Talbert, joining in the conversation, as the captain rolled up his chart and put it away.

"Oh, yes. I like the old veteran very much; but I should never have thought of deviating from the ship's course by his dictation."

The conversation was here broken up by a cry of:—

"Sail O.!" which resounded through the ship from the watch without. The captain and mate took their hats to go on deck and view the stranger. This induced the two ladies to catch up some flimsy sort of headgear, and express a wish to look at the strange sail. Mrs. Talbert took the arm of her husband, and they passed out into the apparent gloom of the night, coming as they did from the strong light within. Raymond could do no less than offer his arm to the lady passenger.

The visible eagerness with which the impulsive girl took the proffered arm startled the over-modest fellow, though his reflections did not take on any very alarming symptoms. As near as could be guessed the problem he set himself to solve was this: "Why, here is this beautiful girl going out to meet her far-away lover, and she fastens to me, upon every trifling occasion, as a 'handy billy' grapples to a main-tack. Dear me! I hope my Mamie won't allow herself to flirt this way with every fellow who offers her a grappling-iron. But then, I guess it's a legitimate way which girls have of amusing themselves behind the scenes and between the acts."

On the other hand, the girl's pertinent thoughts would have surprised the mate more than her acts: "Ah, me! don't I wish my gentleman at the Islands were half as nice as this noble young mate. Would that he were

really and truly my lover, instead of being so taken up with that silly-minded Bedford girl." But what she said was: —

"Goodness! Isn't it pokerish out here?" vigorously accentuating her mimic fears of the darkness by snuggling closer than ever to the side of her escort; imparting a strange and subtle thrill to the young mate, which he could not easily mistake for an attack of dumb ague.

When the group from the cabin became accustomed to the darkness without, they found it was clear starlight and the sail was plainly visible out under the lee bow. The Fleetwing was fast overhauling the stranger, which was soon near enough for Braybrook to make out that she was a whaler.

After a while the people of the vessel ahead also discovered that the fleet ship on their track was a whaler, and an order was immediately given to brail up the mainsail, and back the mainyards; which was meant for a hint that she wished to speak with her brother spouter. The stranger proved to be the ship Minerva, Captain Oric Small, an intimate friend of Captain Talbert.

When this was known, the quarter boat of the Fleetwing was lowered and brought to the gangway, and the manropes shipped into the monkey-rail, ready for the captain. He soon appeared from the cabin, slipped over the side into the boat, and was pulled alongside of the Minerva, for an hour's gam. Captain Small was an old cruiser on the "Steen Ground," and was capable of giving good advice as to the habits of whales thereabout.

Mrs. Talbert, who had watched her husband till the

boat disappeared, was soon compelled to go into the cabin at the call of her child, who was awakened by the noise made when lowering the boat. From motives of courtesy, Raymond asked Miss Allston if she wished to go in, — saying that he should stay out till the boat returned, — to which she replied : —

"No, indeed! It is so much pleasanter out here in the starlight than in the close cabin," emphasizing her words by clinging closer than ever to his arm.

Together they walked on the cabin deck, watching the shadowy outline of the Minerva's masts and sails, seen rising up out of the blacker image of the invisible hull. The stranger ship answered the purpose of the sprightly girl to ask a hundred pertinent questions about the vessel; and answered as a plausible excuse for her keeping company with the retiring sailor whom she admired more than she knew.

Adroitly the diplomatic girl guided the conversation until she drew on the ever-present subject of Raymond's love for Mary Tudor; that she might proffer her sympathy for the hundredth time, dilating upon the cruelty of such a separation. The girl was observing enough to see that, as yet, this was the only bond between them sufficient to make her company seem better than her absence to the lover-like Raymond, who loved best to brood alone in the evening gloom.

"Oh, Mr. Raymond! tell me, don't you expect to get a letter from Mamie by the Minerva?" The shy little minx could well have answered her own question.

"No, this ship sailed a month before we did," and an audible sigh disclosed how welcome such a happy event as the arrival of a letter would be.

Asenith responded sympathetically with an answering sigh, as she continued: —

"I am so sorry for you. It would be such a pleasure for you to receive a nice letter from your absent girl," and the artful creature watched to feel the delicious tremors run through his frame, and listened to the thumps of his great heart, resounding against her arm like the boom of artillery; so aroused was he by the joyful thoughts which the artful girl had awakened in his bosom.

So they walked and talked in the starlight, the fond girl clinging to the officer's arm, prattling in such sympathetic strains as only a really lovable woman can do. There is an innate disposition in all women to thus sound among the shallow depths of other hearts around them; but when a keen-witted girl like Miss Allston obtains the plummet by which to sound such an unexplored heart as Raymond's it becomes an exquisite pleasure to measure the depths by her subtle touches and womanly arts. Thus she continued suggesting thoughts about his darling, and touched Raymond's fancy till it glowed like the starlight which flecked the sea with blobs of dancing light.

Only a woman could disclose what special chords of pleasure were aroused in Miss Allston's heart, while thus deftly touching Raymond's receptive heart-strings, for she not only imparted an exquisite thrill to him, but herself received one in part and in kind as delicious as she gave.

Strange as it may seem to a looker-on, so pre-occupied was Raymond with his love for another woman that he was wholly unconscious of influencing the affections of this girl. It was his personal magnetism acting without either his wish or direction. He was one of those possess-

ing the odic force — in whose hands the hazel rod would not fail to detect the hidden stream. The steady glance of his eye could stir the heart of a receptive woman, as Luna sways the ocean tides. The lightest touch of his hand could impart a glow to his girl companion, and rock her whole being with mysterious melody.

Raymond's company was pleasurable to all who intimately approached him; though he impressed the more negative of his companions most powerfully. A positive person like Braybrook, as we have seen, would at first feel repelled by contact with such a psychologic person. A conscious shock of mental antagonism took place at their meeting, and for weeks afterwards they silently and unobtrusively fought out a mental battle, until the brutal, animal courage of Braybrook gave way, and he confessed in blunt, plain words his inferiority to his young superior. Once upon that footing, they became the best of friends; and Raymond's example in saving the life of his secret foe, would subsequently have been gladly reciprocated by the equally courageous Braybrook.

Captain Talbert stayed so late aboard the Minerva that Raymond insisted upon Miss Allston's retiring.

Reluctantly, the self-willed girl obeyed, though she spent a long wakeful hour in her berth, wondering why her matrimonial project to the Islands daily grew more and more distastful, since she had come to know Raymond so well.

When at length the captain came on board, the yards were braced forward, and sail was shortened so that the two vessels might keep together through the night. Captain Small proposed working off to the west as soon as he

struck the whale-ground, and wished the Fleetwing to keep him company. The Minerva had been kept thus far to the eastward on account of the baffling winds; but Small did not look to find whales thereabout, and could not be induced to cruise there by all Captain Talbert's argument, who, of course, would not disclose his own secret reason.

CHAPTER XXI.

WHALING ON THE "STEEN GROUND."

THE morning after the gam was bright and cloudless. At daylight all sail was crowded upon the Minerva, so that the two ships could keep along together; and as the breeze freshened with the rising sun, the vessels made good way on their south-southeast course. The mast-heads were double-manned; a seaman sat perched on the main royal yard, and an officer and boat-steerer were standing in the fore topgallant cross-trees, leaning across the royal yard, the sail being furled.

Braybrook was aloft forward, busily sweeping the whole curve of the horizon with his glass, showing an alert, nervous tension in his every movement; for a general impression pervaded the ship that whales would certainly be seen during the day. This feeling had been greatly increased by the ship's passing through a fresh whale "glip" just after making sail, where the odor of sperm whale was too fresh to be mistaken for that of any other cetacea. Just where this whale feeling came from none could tell, except that the usual whale-talk on the meeting of two whalers might have been at the bottom of it all.

The Minerva, by carrying sail during the night, had kept abreast of the Fleetwing, and had purposely worked off five miles to leeward to increase the chance of both

ships seeing whales in the morning. Small had declined to "mate" with Captain Talbert — the term used when ships throw their chances together while keeping company, — possibly thinking that his great familiarity with the "Steen Ground" should outweigh the Fleetwing's superiority in whalemen. Besides, the captain of the Minerva was not willing to cruise so far to the eastward of his usual whale-ground, not knowing Talbert's secret reason for so doing.

Captain Talbert came out earlier than usual, as the scent of whale-glip had permeated the cabin, and was to him like the sniff of a hare to the hound. Joining the mate in his brisk walk, together they paced the quarter-deck, looking with sharp, eager glances over the sea at every turn of their limited walk between the cabin and mainmast. There was an appearance of something unusual "in the wind," in their look and movement, for occasionally the two would extend their walk into the waist — the domain of the boat-steerers — and look earnestly down into the water, as if looking for some change in the aquatic aspect before them. Suddenly, as the two officers came briskly up to the larboard gangway for the twentieth time, they both exclaimed with eager, joyous voices: —

"Here we are! Water green as a leek."

After scanning the changed appearance a moment, and looking astern for the blue element which they had just emerged from, the captain, as if to give vent to the nervous tension he was in, stepped quickly to the main-tack, where he could see the forward lookouts, and bellowed at the top of his voice: —

"Aloft, there! Here we are, right among 'em! Now peel your eyes an' look sharp everywhere!"

"Ay, ay, sir!" answered Braybrook, with a ring of the same joyous timbre in his voice; "there's not a thing in sight big as a Mother Carey's chicken."

The previous blue color of the sea was gone, as by a touch of magic. Imperceptibly the ship had glided into a bright pale-green, having a greasy glint of bronze on its surface. The snow-white crest that recently capped the dark azure waves, had now given place to a sickly yellow foam on the green billows. It was as though the bright morning sun now mixed his tawny beams more freely with the one water than he had previously done with the other.

The ship had run upon the famous "Steen Ground," a comparatively shoal place on the extreme southern end of the mid-ocean plateau which gives rise to the Azores. Around the southern edge of this shoal sweeps the great African branch of the Gulf Stream, flowing westward from the Canary Islands, and continuing west to the north shore of Cuba, where it rejoins the parent stream, though much reduced in temperature. There is an ocean channel 15,000 feet deep around three sides of this vast mid-Atlantic plateau, and sperm whales frequent the inner curves of the warm current where it laps about the two shoal places at the extremities of the plateau.

The Minerva was five miles off, having dropped back upon the quarter of the Fleetwing. It was not long before she struck the green water, when up went her helm, her yards were squared in, and the ship was kept off due west, evidently making an attempt to follow along the

green water edge of the shoal. There is a well understood theory among whalemen that sperm whales have a liking for the eddies found along the rim of shoals, and running counter to ocean currents.

The movement of the companion ship served to bring up the discussion of the night before, and the captain and mate openly talked over the matter afresh, — not speaking of Uncle Joe's agency, however, — and in a few hours it was known throughout the ship that the Fleetwing was to cruise far to the east of the usual whale-ground. This caused a flutter of dissent among the knowing ones, at the head of which was Braybrook, who believed that Small's greater experience should have been considered.

To end further discussion, Uncle Joe was called into the cabin and asked to further expound his views. The old veteran could not promise that whales would be seen that day, but he was very positive that this was the place to seek them. He asserted that the Minerva would not find whales to the west, as all undisturbed bodies of whales were always seen coming from the eastward and must pass the Fleetwing before the Minerva or other western ships could encounter them. This was good enough logic for even Raymond's doubting mind; so the ship was kept on to the south till nearly night, when she ran into blue water at the southern edge of the shoal, and was tacked about to the northeast, toward the northern edge again.

At sunset sail was shortened to double-reefed topsails, spanker, and jib; and boat's-crew watches were set. There were light showers during the night, but at daylight all was clear and breezy as on the previous day. All

hands were called out early, and sail was fully made before the sun emerged from the sea. The ship was headed north, running two points free, that she might cover as much ground as possible. The mast-heads were double-manned. Uncle Joe took his trick aloft at the fore, showing a little more "spring-halt" in his legs than usual, as he mounted slowly and laboriously up the fore shrouds, to the usual perch on the topgallant cross-trees.

The increased exaggeration in the old man's walk was deemed hopeful evidence of his rising enthusiasm about whales; thus his comical gait was closely observed and reported whenever there was a question among the crew of seeing whales, and their hopes rose or fell in exact accordance with the kinks discovered in Joe Bailey's locomotors.

It must be remembered that in addition to the usual bow-leggedness of a sailor, which is an outward athwartships curve, Uncle Joe's legs were gifted with a variety of other kinks. His fore-and-aft angular crooks at hips and knees, and sharp turn-up of the feet, served to conspicuously elongate his heels; making the old gent's long lank perambulators three-jointed, like a gony's wing. These manifold kinks were beautifully adapted to diminish the sprawl and abbreviate the length of the old man's legs, after the open-and-shut fashion peculiar to a clothes-horse.

While Raymond was telling Braybrook and the boat-steerers, who were gathered about the fife-rail at the main-mast, about his wonderful dream of whaling during the morning watch, out bobbed Captain Talbert from the cabin, rubbing his eyes and exclaiming: —

"Oh, the whale that I have dreamed about during the night!"

Then came the details of the two whaling scenes which had transpired in the "Land o' Nod"; followed by critical questionings as to which tack the ship was on, and what direction the dream-whales were coming from. Singularly enough, both dreamers agreed that the ship was on the southern tack, and the whales were heading down before the wind, which was at the east. This being the case, sailing to the north seemed to be running away from dreamland, where the whales had been seen. Nevertheless, the captain determined to keep on to the northern edge of the shoal before he tacked south, in opposition to the united wisdom of the main-hatch conclave.

Eight bells struck, and Mr. Bailey came down to breakfast. Before he was fairly seated at table, the captain eagerly assailed him with the question:—

"Where are the whales, Uncle Joe?"

"Mussy sakes, sah! no hurry 'bout dem yare whales. Dey's gittin' fat, jes fast ez dey can. Dis chile's bones am chuck full ob 'parm whales dis mornin'. No 'stake 'bout dar cumin' bumby, sah."

"What sort o' feeling is it with whales in your bones?" asked the second mate, seeking to get a dig at the old veteran, as usual.

"Why, doan yer kno', sah? Suffin like rumatiz, peddlin' roun' frough yer carcass. Den sumtime it's like bein' dreffle hungry; so yo' wanter hab plum duff fur dinner."

"Is that so? Oh, I have that plum duff feeling mighty often," retorted Braybrook, with a sense of having got the worst of it, from the general laugh at his expense.

When Raymond told Uncle Joe about the whale-dreams, and asked his opinion about going on the other tack, the old whaleman deferred giving his answer for the present.

As usual before turning in, Mr. Bailey took his seat upon the carpenter's work-bench, beaft the tryworks, for his after-breakfast smoke. He was not inclined to encourage those who believed whales would be seen before night. As it was his watch below, he soon retired to his stateroom, and during the next two hours the old man's voice was occasionally heard in plaintive tones of prayer.

Soon after ten o'clock Mr. Bailey emerged from his stateroom, and went to the after cabin door, in search of the captain. Mrs. Talbert asked him in, and sent little Emily on deck to find her father. The captain came in, and Uncle Joe at once informed him that the whales were at that moment to windward of the ship, and not very far off. He further explained that though the school would not be seen while the ship was on the northern tack, yet it was best not to go about until the ship had reached blue water at the northern edge of the shoal; else the whales, when seen, would be too far to windward for lowering. The captain deemed it best to keep the exciting news to himself, and not even Raymond was told the prophecy till evening.

Just before eleven o'clock the Fleetwing ran out of green water. The captain's voice was soon heard giving orders: —

"Stand by for stays! Hands to the braces! Cook and steward, tend fore and main sheets! Helm alee!"

"Alee it is, sir!"

"Tacks and sheets! — Let go and haul! — Round with your head braces! Board your tacks, and aft sheets!"

The fleet ship shot up into the wind's eye, and breasted the blue seas as she swung gracefully round on the port tack. The yards were braced sharp up, so that the ship could head southeast, which diverged quickly away from her old north and south track, and soon gave the lookouts new ground to survey.

Uncle Joe had kept the deck until the ship went about. Seated upon the work-bench, with a short black pipe in his mouth, the weird old man sat leaning back against the tryworks. Gazing up at the blue sky, seen between the canvas pyramids which careened to the breeze, he seemed rapt in profound reverie. At such times there was something awe-inspiring in the benignant expression of that spare, black face: a visage made hideous with wrinkles and deformity, but which now seemed lighted up as by some inward divinity.

When the old saint's pipe was smoked out, the black lips still held the empty thing in its accustomed place; though his mouth moved as if he communed with unseen beings in the air. So he sat in his favorite roosting-place for an hour, wholly unconscious of the uproar going on around him, until aroused by the captain's orders to tack ship. The sailors believed Uncle Joe saw whales in a mental mirage in the air, as they had seen ships and boats whaling, sixty miles away, in the Arctic mirages.

When the ship was in full trim on the southern tack, Mr. Bailey went to his berth with a smiling face, and turned in and slept soundly; for at twelve o'clock the

cabin boy had quite a time waking the old gent for dinner.

Braybrook was the last to come from aloft at noon. And not being in the secret, he began his usual course of raillery, the moment Uncle Joe took his seat at table.

"Well, Mr. Bailey, I've looked myself 'bout blind, and not a spout have I seen. I've got a kink in my head that you promised whales for us about here somewhere. How is it?"

"Well, sah, I specs de bressed Lawd doan hurry hisself et ebbry hint we uns gin 'im 'bout dese tings."

"Then you don't believe in answer to prayer?"

"Yis, I duz, Misser Braybruk. But de Lawd tex time to gin us whales. Fust ar leedle rain, an' den cums de sunshine. So it am best ter ke'p prayin' till dey cum, sah."

"Oh, I'll leave that to you; dreams and prayers always go backward with me."

"Sorry ter hear dat, sah. Dis child hab had sum so't ob 'parm whale feelin' ter-day; and I shouldn't be s'prised ef yo' los' yer watch b'low dis arternoon."

"Oh, fudge. I shall turn in all the same. And I'll bet you a Sunday-go-ter-meetin' hat that we don't see whales to-day, nor to-morrow, nuther."

"Guess dis nigger better bet, sah. Dis cullud pussun wouldn't min' habin' dat hat. I gin 'way all de bes' clo's fo' I lef' home. An', brudder Braybruk, de way dem yar 'parm whales bin cum 'long lately, dis child wul want ar go-ter-meetin' hat, and sum mo' clo's, bumby, sah."

"Well, it's a bet."

"A tall hat, sah? None of yer low-down tings sich ez de Bedford folk w'ar."

"Oh, yes; tall as the mainmast, so you can carry a pair of boots and a night-gown in it."

With a deal of hilarity the officers scattered from the dinner-table, each assuming his duty or pastime of the hour. Braybrook took to his berth, as he had said he would, in spite of the prophecy, which was received in the spirit of banter in which it was given. It was Raymond's turn at the mast-head, and he took down the spyglass as he passed through the vestibule, and went immediately aloft; for Uncle Joe's raillery meant more to him than to his brother officer.

Soon as the mate could adjust his spyglass after reaching the cross-trees, he carefully swept the horizon from bow to beam on either hand. Whenever a tiny sea-cap flashed in his glass, or its field was crossed by a white-winged bird, the mate's heart leaped; so taut was the tension upon his nerves. But after a long, exhaustive look the tremor of expectation subsided, and he settled himself down into two hours' thorough survey of the watery expanse traversed by the ship.

Closing his glass, and suspending it from his shoulder, the mate leaned easily across the royal yard; and though he scanned the green sea closely, it was with a mechanical gaze, for the crest of every wave was peopled with dancing images of pretty Mary Tudor; and whales were wholly excluded from his mental vision.

Ten minutes passed, and what a change came over the three loitering mast-head's-men! Far away on the emerald rim of the horizon there rose up a monument of mar-

bled foam, showing sheeny white in the mid-day sun. The voices of the mate and the boat-steerer yelled lustily : —

"There's white wat-e-r-r!" It was the huge breach of a large sperm whale, which loomed big as a ship's top-sail against the blue sky.

"Where away's that breach?" cried the captain from the quarter-deck, where he was romping with his child and bantering the ladies.

"Two points on the weather bow, fifteen miles off.— There he breach-e-s!" as a great mountain of foam again blotted out a dome-shaped piece of blue sky on the far verge of the sea.

"Sing out every time you see him!" continued the captain, as he stood watching the forward lookouts from the main tack.

"There he breaches!" as for the third time the whale leaped out his whole length into the air. This was the last of him for that rising.

Buntline was called upon to take the wheel, and the ship was kept along touch and go; the weather-leach of the main royal just quivering in the steady breeze, as an aspen leaf trembles at the playful kiss of the wind.

An hour and a quarter passed, and no further trace of the whale had been seen. The vessel had been going a trifle over five knots — as tested by the log — and should be at least seven miles nearer the whale than when last seen.

Captain Talbert walked the deck impatiently; he was getting nervous; there were thirty pairs of eyes aloft, and the usual time of a large whale's rising and sounding

had passed. Just when the tension had become intense, there came the bellowing shout of twenty voices: —

"There he breach-e-s!" with such a yell as might have come from an assault of brigands.

A long black object had suddenly emerged from the sea, right ahead of the ship, about eight miles away. It was the long-looked-for whale, just three miles too far off to see him spout. His black form disappeared, giving place to two milk-white columns of foam forty feet high. Ere the foam-columns could fall, up leaped a volume of green water between — the last swash of the submerged whale. Then down went green water and white foam together, leaving a great blob of snowdrift tossing about on the sea.

This was the typical breach of a large sperm whale, as distinguished from that of a thin-sided finback whale, in which there is *no after-swash of water* rising between the previous columns of foam. This distinction is perceptible far as the eye can reach, so that an experienced whaleman is rarely deceived.

Twice more the lookouts beheld the gladdening sight, and thirty voices joined in the wild chorus of shouts. The whale was too far off to distinguish spouts, which, not being more than ten feet high, were yet hidden below the rim of the horizon.

An hour and twenty minutes went by before the whale was again seen. Everybody got anxious lest the ship should overrun the distance and scare the whale. But for the last half-hour the ship had been crowded into the wind; every luff-cloth in the sails was kept fluttering, endeavoring to gain a weather-gauge of the whale, so

that the boats should be favored by free wind and fair sea.

Eight bells struck, and the alarm became intensified, for the whale was down five minutes longer than before. Men spoke in whispers, and a hush of breathless excitement pervaded the ship. The captain came to the main-tack and hailed to the mate in an undertone: —

"They're down a long time. I'm afraid we have overrun them."

"Not too long for very large whales, sir," Raymond replied.

"Could you make out just how the whales were heading?"

"Yes, sir. A little off from where we sterned, when the r'yal was just touch and go in the wind."

"Are you sure of it? It would be bad business to run upon 'em."

"I'm perfectly sure about it."

The conversation was broken off by an eighty-foot whale leaping his whole length out of water, about a mile and a half away. Turning over upon his side while yet poised in the air, the whale tumbled back with a mighty splash upon the sea, now showing but *one* column of broken water and foam, instead of three, for the whale was fairly broadside to the lookouts, and not end-on, as before. At least fifty other whales were soon seen spouting around the first one; it proved to be a school of large whales.

The ship had crept up to windward of the school, which now appeared four points off the lee bow. The men knew better than to make a great outcry, with the whales so near. An order from the mate to: —

"Tumble down from aloft, boys, and stand by the boats!" sent all hands but the cooper scrambling down the rigging like monkeys, or riding down the backstays at the risk of their necks.

The courses were brailed up, the royals and fly-jib were taken in and furled by the ship-keepers. The mainyards were laid aback, leaving the ship to drift while the boats were lowered.

Mrs. Talbert stood near her husband's boat, holding her child by the hand, watching the captain's glowing face with loving, anxious eyes, as his boat dropped slowly into the sea. The ship-keepers gathered in the tackle-falls, and secured them carefully to the davit-heads.

Asenith Allston was leaning over the other quarter-rail, and the heart of the beautiful girl was in her eyes as never before. The mate had always contrived to meet with such perils that it was like parting on the brink of the grave every time he lowered. The girl was bent upon having a last word with Raymond, as he stood there in the stern-sheets of his boat, impatiently waiting for the captain to lower, and, as he had promised, giving Braybrook a chance to get away from the ship before him. As he gave the word to lower, he met the girl's eyes on a level with the rail as she pleadingly said: —

"Please don't go into needless danger, Mr. Raymond." The look which met the mate's eyes was pleading and tender, such as only one other girl had given him before; but he did not take in its full import at the time. "Promise me, won't you?" continued the blushing girl.

"Oh, fair lady, you don't know the fun of it, or you wouldn't ask me to bridle my gait"; and he laughed away

the girl's fear for the moment, until she could almost feel the wild joy which ran like a frenzy in the blood at the thought of an encounter.

When fairly clear of the ship, the boats headed for the whales, which were then drawing down off the beam. Masts were stepped in the bow-thwarts, sails loosed and spritted, sheets flung aft and trimmed to a beam wind, putting life and legs into the fleet craft in an instant. While the sails were being set, the crews shipped out their oars, peaked them in the cleats at the bottom of the boat. This done, they caught up their paddles and plied them nimbly from their elevated seats on the gunwale.

It was a pretty sight to see the four dancing cockle-shells under sail, leaping from wave to wave as they sped like a bird alee. When fairly headed for the school, the nearest whales were about half a mile distant from the captain and Braybrook, the leading boats. Soon after, a large, yellow-headed fellow came up quite near to Captain Talbert's boat, though hidden from him by the sail. Mr. Antoine was the first to see him as he thrust his head out to spout, and called to the captain: —

"Big feller jes come up, sir. Two p'ints off de lee bow, 'hind de sail from you, sir."

The black eyes of the swarthy Portuguese danced with excitement, with this sure promise of a chance. With one sweep of his steering oar, the captain swung off his boat till the whale showed to windward of the mast; then sprang upon the clumsy cleats for a better view of the whale, fearing lest this straggling fellow might be spying the boats, ready in due time to warn the school. This matter determined, he soon announced his conclusion: —

"Paddle hard, boys. That's our whale. I can see the starboard boat's mark on him. See the old sog lay there, coaxing us to come and take him. Twig his yellow head when he spouts. See his big hump. Why don't you paddle? All gone to sleep, sure as the world. Wake up, you sleepyheads, and paddle like thunder. Reach your blades well for'ard, an' throw 'em well aft. Hush there, Bill! don't thump the side o' the boat. Don't spirt your suds so, Jim; that whale's got a thousand ears in his head."

"'Nother feller on de starboard hand o' our whale, sir."

"Never mind t'other whale; this chap's got our mark on him. Stand up and get ready, Mr. Antoine. See your box-line clear, and brace your clumsy legs in shape for darting. Two more spoutings and he's ours. Put away the paddles and get to your thwarts, but don't touch your oars till you're told."

The whale was jogging easily along to the southwest, the hindmost and largest of all, and apparently the spy-whale of the school. Yet he had not heard the sly-coming boat following in his wake. A breathless hush seized upon every soul in the boat; the three green hands cowered at the thought of approaching danger, and sat with gaping mouths, endeavoring to still their noisy heart-beats.

The burly boat-steerer stood with his body thrown back in position to dart; balancing his iron carefully, he gripped its stout hickory pole with both hands, awaiting the given word. Having put his men in position for work, the captain ceased to notice anything but the one mighty object before him, upon which he fastened his blue eyes

with a savage glare. Though his eyes were fixed, his jaws were going furiously, munching his huge quid, and squirting his nicotine fluid to starboard and port; often ejecting his filthy tobacco-juice straight forward into the boat, at the risk of blinding the tub and after oarsmen, who ducked and dodged to escape the quick succeeding shots from the skipper's Gatling gun.

At last the boat approached within her length of the broad flukes; a stroke of the steering oar and she cleared the tail, rounded it, and headed forward on the whale.

"Stand by, Antoine. — Take your oars, men. Let go your sheet, boy. — Give it to him, Antoine! Second iron, quick! — Stern all, out of the suds. Stern hard! he's close under us! Well. Peak your oars. In sail and down mast."

The surprised whale flung up his head when the first iron struck against his shoulder-blade, hollowed his back with a nervous jerk, and thrashed his flukes furiously for half a minute, then settled under water and plunged headlong down for a running sound.

The whole school disappeared as suddenly as the fast whale; as if each individual had received an iron in his flank. All wheeled under water and headed back to windward, whence they came, running at full speed, the fast whale among them and probably leading the lot.

Braybrook and Bailey were close upon other whales when the captain struck, but their chances were snatched from them at the last moment; Braybrook being within two darts at the time. All rolled up their sails and took to their oars for a long pull to windward. The school ran a mile beyond the ship before they broke water. The

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GIVE HIM SECOND IRON!

fast whale was among them when they came up, but he soon straggled behind, turned and jogged slowly off to leeward towards the boats.

Before the captain could gather in his line, Raymond met the whale head-and-head, on the one side; and Braybrook — though farther off — met him on the other. The mate went into the head of his boat, and sent Hoogley aft to the steering oar, harboring the cunning design of not only fastening to the whale, — as in duty bound, — but meaning to kill him at the same time.

Raymond had just time to get out a lance and put in place of the second iron, when the boat shot fairly up to the whale's life, and in went both iron and lance, fair down into the hollow over the shoulder-blade; just six inches above Antoine's iron, — which ought to have been darted with more care, — and killed the beast at the outset.

The waist-boat pulled up on the opposite side, and just as Morey darted his iron the whale spouted blood, jetting a couple of pailfuls of his life-fluid into their boat, completely drenching the second mate and the three after oarsmen in gore. A shout rang out over the sea from the three other boats' crews; while Braybrook cried out, with a touch of anger in his tones: —

"Durn the beast! He's spilling his claret inter the wrong boat. We might as well dress in sackcloth, and done with it. We're always in at the funeral of somebody's whale."

As the captain's boat dashed in among them, Mr. Bailey hailed to know if he should chase on after the school.

"Oh, no," was the reply; "they are too badly fright-

ened to stop for hours. We'll hurry up and cut this fellow in, and be ready for them when they return."

Mr. Bailey was told to pull to the ship, and work her to windward, ready to take the whale. As there were two other boats fast, the captain hauled up and cut off his line, saved the iron-pole, and then pulled to the ship, ready to board her at the same time with the bow-boat.

The whale ran slowly off to leeward, spouting thick blood for an hour. Braybrook and his men busied themselves about their personal ablutions, cleansing the sticky, stinging blood-clots from their faces and clothes; after which the whole boat had to be washed out. The effect of whale-blood is to blister the lips, nettle the face, stain the clothing, and rust the bright shanks of the polished lances.

After the open-air toilet of boat and men was fully accomplished, Braybrook got out his pipe, loaded and lit it, and succeeded in narcotizing himself into fairly good humor by the time the whale turned up; which was not until after the sun had determined upon a watch below, and rudely left the boats in the dark, without bidding good night to any one.

On her second tack, the Fleetwing came up and took the whale, which was fluke-chained and secured by torch-light. A flare was made of whale-scraps sufficient to light up the whole proceeding, and cast a bright glare far and wide over the ocean. Sail was shortened, and boat-crew watches set until daylight, when all were to be roused out for cutting.

CHAPTER XXII.

STRIKING A SPERM WHALE HEAD-ON.

MORE than a week had passed since the last whale was taken, boiled out, and stowed in the hold. After such a busy scene is fairly over, time hangs heavily on the whaleman's hands for a while. Not even a sail had passed in sight of the Fleetwing. But the moon would soon full, and the wise ones would then look for another spirt of whaling.

About two hours after the ship had been tacked round from the northern edge of green water, a sail was raised, far down on the lee bow. The lookouts soon discerned men at her mast-head, and made out that she was a whaler. Captain Talbert kept the ship away to meet the new-comer, glad of something to break the monotony of the day.

The spouter proved to be the Minerva. Captain Small tacked about close under the wing of the Fleetwing, lowered his boat, came aboard and spent the afternoon and evening. He had not seen the spout of a whale since the ships parted company, and was evidently a little piqued when told that the Fleetwing had taken one hundred and ten barrels, and had sent the school hurrying back to windward, whence they came.

When the captains parted, late in the evening, they con-

cluded to keep company for a few days; and Small now readily agreed to mate with the Fleetwing, the two ships to throw their chances together while seeing whales. The Minerva ran off about five miles during the night, to put a good distance between the ships, and morning found them well separated, with a bright, clear day before them.

The pleasant, lazy afternoon of that day was slowly wearing away. The two mated ships were steering a southeast course, sailing a little off from the wind, which was light for the northeast trades. The ships were then nearly five miles apart, going along about six miles an hour.

There was no work going on in the rigging, alow or aloft. The deck watch strove to kill time by smoking, reading, and yarning; the latter function being of such a soporific order that most of the story-tellers' audience were asleep. A languid, do-nothing feeling seemed to have seized upon all but the lookouts aloft, and the man at the wheel. The probability of seeing whales that day was becoming very small, when, suddenly, Braybrook hailed down from aloft with a voice loud enough to waken the dead, — causing a dozen sleepers to spring to their feet with a stupid, inquisitive stare: —

"On deck there! The Minerva is manœuvring as if she saw whales. She's keeping away dead afore the wind."

"All right. Watch her sharply," answered Raymond, as he sprang from his seat at the taffrail, where he had been chatting with Miss Allston, and now bade the steward report the news to the captain.

Captain Talbert came hastily from the cabin, rubbing

his eyes; for somnolence seemed to have invaded the quarter-deck as well as the forecastle.

"What's up, Mr. Raymond?"

"The Minerva has sighted something, and is running off with square yards. Shall we square in and run to leeward?"

"Yes, keep the ship away, and follow after her." The captain caught up his spyglass, threw the lanyard over his neck, and hastened aloft.

In less than a minute, everybody was astir on board. The helm was put up, the after-yards were squared in, and the ship's course was made to correspond to the Minerva's. The watch below was aroused by the mast-head cry, and every soul came scrambling up, blocking the fore-scuttle in their haste — the companionway being off for the better ventilation of the forecastle. Though but half awake, most of the men mounted up the rigging and scattered along the foretopsail and fore-yards, all eager to catch a glimpse of the whales which were supposed to be seen by the Minerva.

The Fleetwing ran off nearly five miles before the leeward ship changed her course. Presently the Minerva was seen rounding to, aback; and directly after down went all four of her boats, and chased off before the wind, under sails and paddles. But as yet not a sign of whales could be seen.

A half hour more passed; and the ship had run down within two miles of the Minerva, when the lookouts discovered a sudden splurge of white water among her boats. Down came their sails and in a minute more one of the boats drew swiftly out from the others, with the suds flying from her bow, showing she was fast.

The fast boat was seen coming full drive to windward. It remained to be seen whether there was a school, or only a lone whale. But it was believed that there were more than one whale, so the Fleetwing was kept steadily on to leeward.

Captain Talbert called down to the mate and ordered him to put in the lines, hoist and swing the boats, and make ready to lower quickly. All knew that the chance of catching a gallied whale was not worth much. But as the whole voyage turns upon chance, it becomes the duty of a whaleman to down boats and chase a shadow if it takes the semblance of a whale. The fast boat had at length approached within two miles of the Fleetwing, and the long suspense put every one on tiptoe, when suddenly thirty men loudened as with one voice: —

"There they are!"

"There they blow!"

"A big school of sperm whales!"

Then came the captain's voice: "Hard aport! Bring the ship to, with the mainyards aback. Stand by the boats!"

While the ship was luffing to the wind, officers and men scrambled down the rigging, or slid humming down the backstays, leaving a streak of pitch burned into the calves of their trowsers, or a stain of tar on their hands. Boat-headers and boat-steerers sprang into their boats, ready to lower, their several crews gathering into position to quickly follow the boats to the water. All waited in the wildest enthusiasm for the ship to come to the wind, that they might dart down after the prey.

The ship-keeper and his crew braced up the fore and

mizzen topsails, set the spanker, brailed up the foresail and hauled down the flying jib, that the vessel might lie quiet while the boats were lowered.

Captain Talbert remained aloft to watch the whales and direct the mates by signals how best to meet the school. The three larboard boats were now ordered down. The whales being about a mile and a half away, coming heads out full tilt to windward — a large school, reaching from the lee quarter far out on the lee bow. Captain Small himself was fast to a whale in the snarl of five out on the quarter, and was trying his utmost to get an effective lance. The Minerva's three other boats were a mile to leeward of the school, pulling to windward hard as they could spring.

When the Fleetwing's boats had lowered and were fairly clear of the ship, the school was seen coming, about a mile away. Raymond's boat was the first to get clear and take to his oars. While Hoogley was putting his irons into the crotch, and coiling his box-line clear, the mate mounted the stern-sheets to get run of the whales. He was not long making choice of a pod of large whales out under the lee bow, and ordered the crew to pull hard, endeavoring to get fairly ahead of them. Three minutes' pulling brought the boat to the required position, and the crew were ordered to lay on their oars : —

"Way enough, men. Heave up, but keep your oars in hand ready for quick action. Mind what I am going to say : Don't let me see a man of you looking over his shoulder when we're going on to the whales. We've a ticklish job before us, and you must watch to get your cue from me, when to pull, and when to stern.

"Stand up, Hoogley, and get your ideas about you. Mind, my boy, keep cool as a cucumber. Make a right-handed dart, and don't throw your iron at the head, nor let fly at slack blubber, while the back is hollowed."

"Ay, ay, sir." And the black eyes of the brave little Malay flushed with tigerish vehemence at the fun before him.

"Gracious, how they are coming!" continued the mate. "It will be a tight squeeze, John, to go between those two big fellows. But that's our chance; for we must pick from the biggest."

"We'll have to trail our oars, to run amuck 'tween them uns, sir," sagaciously observed the boat-steerer.

"Right, John. We'll trail the oars, or ship them in. Do you hear, boys? Keep your eyes peeled for the order." And Raymond flashed his eyes over his crew to see if they were alert, and caught his meaning.

"All right, sir," answered brave Tom Crawford, cheerily speaking for his boatmates. A rap on the head would be Tom's reminder for any cowardly delinquent within reach of his hand.

"Hoogley, we'll take that old gray-headed fellow on the port bow, the one with a grayish hump, big as a meeting-house; and a white scar across his jowl, where a devil-fish has clawed him in a fight."

"Ay, ay, sir. I'se got my eye on 'im. He's mine sure plumb."

The boat was meeting a compact group of ten monsters, coming heads on, all in a row, full tilt to windward. As the whales came surging up toward the surface, showing a pale pea-green, while yet under the sea, they

rolled up a great green billow before them, fringing it with foam as they broke water. Then thrusting their vast heads twenty feet out, they dashed like a whirlwind against the meeting seas.

The two whales between which the mate meant to pass were running side by side, only at times leaving sufficient room for a boat to squeeze through, even with the oars shipped in. Raymond had deliberately made choice of the largest whale in the school, willing to take the one chance in ten of escaping a stoven boat — a pleasurable peril very much to his liking.

A more prudent whaleman would have selected a whale on the outside of the school, as did Braybrook, and run little risk in fastening. But the largest whales are always in the middle of a pod when in rapid motion. The large whales start the race, and keep the lead; the smaller ones gather timidly about and follow the leader.

The school now approaching the boat all came leaping out together, spouting and sounding at the same instant. It was an appalling display of brute power, for the whales were coming with frightful velocity. The frail boat seemed but a fly in their path; an atom, to be crushed in an instant by the lightest blow of head or fin or flukes. Though the speed of the whales was evidently accelerated by fright, they seemed more like maddened demons bent upon mischief.

Raymond sprang on to the foot-cleats in the stern-sheets, elevating his position for a better view. His eyes were alight with delirious pleasure as he drew near the deadly peril. His voice grew low and deep and resonant as the final crisis approached. He plied his steering oar

quickly, holding it with an iron grasp, as he steered the boat with utmost precision towards the seething waters between the leaping whales.

The half breaching whales had now approached very near to the boat. Their combined spouts sounded like the roar of a cataract. Their downward plunge left the wild waters whirling like a maelstrom. The faces of the new hands were pallid as marble. But there were three big-hearted fellows in that boat whose heart-beats were like the tattoo of a drum-call, sounding the charge.

"Stand by, Hoogley, and take your iron," exclaimed the mate. "One more spouting and we'll take him. Keep cool, my lad, and don't dart till I tell you. Are you ready, John?" and his voice sank to a whisper.

"Let him come, sir. I'll plug 'im!" John's left leg was braced firmly in the clumsy cleat, and his lithe body was bent back ready to dart when the whale should appear within reach of his iron.

"Here they come!" whispered Raymond, as he pointed the boat's head fair between the two uprising junks. "Brace yourself, Hoogley, ready for a fling. — Trail your oars, men! — Here comes his head. Not yet, John. — There's his back. — Now he dips. Give it to him! — Another one! — Well done. Overboard your box-warp. Mind the line don't jump the chocks while the boat turns to windward," shouted the mate.

"Line all clear, sir," yelled the triumphant Hoogley, from out the swash of foam, catching his breath between the dashing seas as the half-buried boat spun round after the leaping whale.

"Take your oars," called the mate. "Pull three!

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HEAD-AND-HEAD.

Stern two oars hard! Round with the boat after the fellow.—All right. Peak your oars, and bail the boat. Come aft here, John!"

"Ay, ay, sir!"

The mate peaked his steering oar, and the two officers passed each other in the middle of the boat, exchanging brief congratulations as they passed.

"Big feller, Mr. Raymond."

"Yes, John; and you did the thing neatly; chucking in two irons in ten seconds can't be beat."

"Had a bully chance, sir, an' couldn't help it."

There was a cartload of joy in the hearts of those two men. Though the black Malay and the white mate were socially widely sundered, they were like lovers at that moment — so elevating is the affinity of courage in the estimation of brave men.

The boat was well fast with two irons; and, by carefully checking the line, Raymond had managed to get the boat headed round after the whale — a dangerous problem in a seaway. Then snubbing the line gradually at the loggerhead, away went the boat to windward, racing over the rolling seas like a cloud-shadow chased by the wind.

They had passed safely through that perilous gap of floundering whales and foaming breakers, without boat or oars touching the fast whale. But the starboard gunwale went grazing, bump, bump, along the head and bilge of the off whale, which pitched hurriedly and went down the instant the boat's bow passed his eye.

The prick of Hoogley's first iron made the fast whale fling his huge body away from the boat, his great flukes crashing down across the back of the whale beyond;

causing the whale to kick furiously, spouting with a snort of fright and fury, as he too plunged below to escape the general panic above the sea.

About the time Raymond got fast, the waist-boat struck in the other pod of five whales, out on the ship's quarter, half a mile away. Braybrook's boat was also now racing away in the wind's eye, keeping company with the Minerva's whale, which Captain Small was fast to in the same pod.

For the next ten minutes the whole school kept under water, running rapidly. They passed the ship, which had boarded her fore and main tacks, and was making the most weatherly work she could, as it looked like a tough windward job the boats had in hand.

Mr. Bailey was following the larboard boat, his crew buckling to their oars for a long, tiresome pull. The Minerva's three boats were still tugging away two miles astern of their fast whale, which bid fair to run them out of sight.

The Minerva's pod of whales came up first, streaking it to windward faster than ever. Captain Small and Braybrook were in hail of each other, their boats running a parallel course. Both men were expert whalemen, and naturally compelled by present circumstances to be somewhat emulous of each other. They had indulged in pleasant chat while the whales were down; but the moment the school came up, both boat-headers went savagely to work, each endeavoring to be the first to kill his whale, and doubtless willing to show the young mate how the thing should be done properly.

While the school was sounding, Raymond busied himself putting two lances in the crotch, ready for action.

He also kept an intelligent eye on the veterans over the way, not above learning how they would accomplish the difficult job of killing a running whale. But as Braybrook and Small both failed in their repeated efforts, a disdainful smile curled Raymond's lips, and he turned his attention to his own boat.

When his pod of racing monsters came up, the mate pulled off his coat and rolled up his sleeves, verily like a man wishing to come to close quarters with his work — possibly having it in mind to pit himself squarely against the two veterans over yonder, for there was a ring of triumph in his voice as he ordered the crew to face forward and haul line, though the boat was then clipping it fifteen knots against the toppling seas, and the spray flew over the bow as if a street water-cart were drenching them.

A half-hour's hard pulling line brought the larboard boat up to the very heels of the whale. But it was a grave question how to get ahead the next sixty feet, where the mate could kill his prize. Pulling on by oars was out of the question; Small and Braybrook had both failed to accomplish anything with their oars. Bowing on seemed the only feasible method, and that was both difficult and dangerous when running at such speed.

There are two ways of bowing a boat on to a running whale. The most common and least dangerous way is to reach forward of the bow and take in the bight of the line, bringing it across the bow-cleat, on the gunwale near the bow-thwart. While the bow-oarsman hauls on the line, the other men pull ahead on their oars, endeavoring to work round the flukes and haul forward far enough to

lance the whale. But the speed of the whale on this occasion was too great for the boat to make headway against it, in the face of the meeting seas. The other boats had also tried this process, and without success.

Waiting for the three large occasional seas to pass, the crew made ready to solve the other hazardous problem of killing a whale when running at top speed against a rough sea. The boat must be trimmed well over to starboard, as a make-weight against the new position of the line, which is then taken boldly out of the bow-chocks, and brought to the larboard bow-cleat. All hands are then set hauling line with a will, though at the risk of capsizing the boat should the whale suddenly sound.

The object of this perilous manœuvre is to give the boat a quick, broad sheer around the flukes, veering her well out to one side of the whale, where the boat can be hauled forward square up to the animal's life, and held there while running parallel with him, however fast he may run, or in whatever direction he may turn. In this way a plucky officer gets sufficient chance to probe away with his lance until blood comes in the spout — the final death-stroke to the prey.

A boat persistently kept in this position can be sheered in or off from the whale by judicious use of the steering oar, and avoid being stoven by keeping forward of the blows from the flukes, and just beaft the sweeping strokes from the jaw of a rolling whale.

This method of outwitting a running whale may have the effect either to scare or enrage him, according to his disposition. In the first case, the animal will speed up to

an incredible velocity, or he may stop short panic-stricken, and easily succumb to his captor.

But if he becomes maddened, then indeed will he task both the courage and skill of his assailant. Yet, if he fights against a worthy combatant, and runs above water, the infuriated monster can neither reach the boat with his blows, nor escape the lance-thrust of an officer equal to the occasion.

While hauling up to his whale, Raymond had watched the other two fast boats repeatedly fail to bow on by the least effective way, using line and oars, and had made up his mind not to waste time trying their method. Turning to brave old Tom Crawford, the bowman, he said: —

"Tom, the boats yonder fail to get forward on their whales. Sink or swim, we must try a way that will succeed."

"Thet's so, sir. 'Twill never do fur ther larboard boat ter miss fire, an' them ere gonies lookin' on."

"Ship in your oars, men. Stow them away handy for a quick grab. Hoogley, this fellow don't use his flukes much, and I'm going to bow on our good old way. Are you ready aft?"

"All right, an' all ready, sir."

"Trim dish to starboard, everybody." And the men slid to that side of their thwarts, ready for the next order.

"Tom, have your 'nipper' ready, and look out for the line."

"All ready, sir, to dandle that babby."

Taking out the chock-pin, the mate deftly lifted the taut line out of the chocks and passed it to the stout bow-oarsman, who landed it in the bow-cleat without accident.

Instantly the swift-running boat sheered broad out to starboard of the whale, in position to haul forward with a little aid from the steering oar. But just then came three big rollers, threatening to swamp the boat with the line out on the gunwale. The great seas passed, and Raymond gave the word: —

"Now haul ahead on the line! Buckle to, every man. John, take your steering oar and guide the sheer of the boat."

"Ay, ay, sir. All clear of the flukes"

"Haul, men. Haul like devils! Bend your backs, and put me forward of his hump. Haul! I tell you. Hold every inch at the loggerhead. Haul; they are watching us from the ship. Never mind the swash of the seas; let us teach the other boats how to do it. Haul! half a boat's length more, and I'll tackle him. Haul, there, you white-livered youngster, what are you afraid of? Avast all! Hold your line at that. Now, John, watch till he humps out his back, then sheer in for a good set. There he dips. Lay on! 'Wood and black skin!'"

And the mate stood shoulder to shoulder with the leaping monster, and thrust his keen lance down into his life; churning it up and down in the lungs with the relish of a famished tiger for his blood.

"There's blood!" shouted all, as the red spout shot into the air, and blew astern like a long red banner fluttering in the wind.

"There's tar!" they cried, as the second spout came thicker and almost black, as the mate reached deeper and deeper with his lance.

"Dead whale! Durn my toplights! beat thet ef yer can,

over yonder," chorused in grinning old Tom, whose face and whiskers were dripping with whale-blood, which fell by the barrel over the boat and crew.

The goring twist brought on the iron by the new position of the boat, together with the thumping of the boat's bow in the water abreast of his eye, so harassed the whale that he tore through the wallowing seas faster than ever. His inability to escape the goading torment finally so enraged the monster that he snapped his great jaws savagely together; reverberating through the boat like the rumble of an earthquake.

Oscillating from side to side, the whale ran with his mouth open. Rolling till his blood-shotten eyes came to the surface, he glared fiendishly upon the boat; swept his great jaw across the bow, feeling desperately about for boat-cedar, as intelligently as an elephant would use his trunk.

Still the audacious boat clung to the maddened whale, as a fleet hound hangs to the flank of a running boar.

Raymond kept his death-dealing lance at work whenever the rolling beast came back up. Now reaching his searching lance-point well forward into the quivering lungs; then drawing his murderous weapon almost out, to replunge it backward into the after lobe of the lung, until the keen steel had cut a score of death-wounds, making doubly sure of his prey. Then came the order: —

"Slack away your line, and drop astern."

When the boat had drifted past the flukes and the line was taken to the chocks, the danger was over. Washing the blood from their faces, — as whale-blood makes smarting eyes and sore lips — the boat was held close to

the flukes of the whale, which showed remarkable strength by still running with the school.

Bowing on in the way described is deemed excellent training for a new crew. In the wild enthusiasm of a "Nantucket sleigh-ride" after such a magnificent steed, the half-dazed crew soon become familiarized with the dreadful situation, and their pallid faces take on the look of health again. The novelty of facing forward, having a full view of the whale, while he cannot endanger the boat by fluke or fin, serves to gloss over the too apparent danger, which soon assumes the mask of fun.

When the face-bathing scene was over,— washing from the blood-stained lavatory of the sea,— a drug iron was bent on, and preparation made to harpoon a loose whale. Without taking the line from the chocks, the boat was hauled forward on the fast whale, passing carelessly over his flukes; the mate's lance having lessened his kicking propensities.

A loose whale soon came up close alongside, and the mate let fly his iron square into his bilge. Catching up his lance, he brought blood at the next spouting. Both fast whales kept together in the school for a few minutes, spouting blood thick and heavy. But the loose whales gradually drew ahead of the dying ones, which were fast losing their grip upon life. Half an hour after, Raymond's two whales were a mile behind the school, and Uncle Joe pulled up and fastened, glad to get rest after his long pull. And together the two crews rode chatting along over the blood-colored sea.

Captain Small and Braybrook were still in the school, with no tinge of blood in the spout of their whales. As

the wind was increasing, and night approaching, it looked like a hopeless task for them.

The ship had just tacked toward the boats, forereaching a little to windward of Raymond. There was a lowering look came over the sun just then, and a black squall was seen rolling down upon ships, boats, and whales. The last seen of the Fleetwing and Minerva they were shortening sail rapidly. A storm of thunder and lightning soon burst upon the boats, and rain poured in torrents. The wind was killed, and the waves cut down as if they had never been. The panic-stricken whales could no longer find a windward way to run.

Raymond's two whales wandered round and round awhile, then struck a bee-line in the direction of the ship. The whales died about the same time, turned up about half a mile apart, almost in hail of the ship. The captain sent down his boat after the squall passed, and helped tow the rich prizes alongside.

When the thunder-storm reached Captain Small's whales, the whole school became panic-stricken — a not infrequent occurrence — and they all brought to in a snarl, heading every way; an opportunity which the two worthy whalemen made good use of, for they not only killed their own whales, but each boat-header lanced and killed a loose one, thus securing four out of five whales in the pod. The fifth one had the sense to sound, and make off in the coming darkness. When the squall cleared, six whales lay dead on the windless sea, three for each ship. As the vessels were mated, the catch must be equally divided.

Small was given his choice of one of the waist-boat's whales, and Braybrook towed his other whale to the Fleet-

wing, with the help of the other boats toward the last. It was nine o'clock before the three whales were secured for the night, sail shortened, and the hands turned off to supper. The moon rose bright, and the Minerva got her three whales alongside soon after midnight. The six whales averaged over seventy-five barrels each; thus both crews were made happy by a catch of two hundred and thirty-five barrels for each ship.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE HURRICANE.

IT was a busy time on board the Fleetwing for ten days after her last whaling. Not the spout of a whale had been seen since, and it was feared none would be seen until the next full moon. As the Fleetwing was bound to the Pacific, the two ships concluded to part company. Small would cruise where he was, while Captain Talbert deemed it best to proceed on his voyage, as further delay would make the ship late for the whaling season in the western ocean.

The ship's course was laid south for the Equator, with a view to crossing in longitude 30° — not in 32°, where a younger master would have crossed. Captain Talbert confessed that he was too old a sea-dog to adopt Lieutenant Maurey's new-fangled notions about currents and sailing directions. Yet the captain's old logs showed long weeks spent in equatorial calms where now a modern vessel need be but a few days crossing, by keeping well to the west of the old beaten tracks, where the angular-shaped doldrums converge to a point like a V.

After fairly entering the northeast trade the weather became one continuous delight, the ship scoring four or five degrees each day on the chart. Throughout the time sea and sky were wedded in a kindred blue. Look into

the azure water whenever you would, and the heart was made glad by its greeting; the frolicsome waves were a laughter-loving set, crooning a joyous melody as they rose and fell, leaping in playful gambols as they raced beside the ship. Look into the violet sky, and the thoughts became restful and prayerful at the goodness of the Creator in providing such a pleasure for the eye of man. How tender and loving the blue canopy bent down over the fleet ship and her happy crew! It seemed full of a spiritual presence, bringing blessing to all God's creatures below, and prompting us to send a return message to the dear ones above.

How gracefully the wind-loving sails breasted their white bosoms to the breeze, through all those bright days. The great topsails leaned lovingly out over the blue mirror beneath, counting the dangling reef-points, which hung in triple rows from their sheeny breasts — much as a maiden peers at her ringlets, and croons at her swelling bust in the glass. So with the three pretty royals, and the star-gazing skysail, which were seen coquetting like a simpering girl in the water-mirror, delighted to see their curved reflections dancing in the crests of the sunlit sea.

Throughout those sheeny days a pretty "shadow-ship" kept ever at the side of the Fleetwing, — as a loving dog may follow his master, — closely mimicking the very hoist of her topsails, the set of her staysails, and the trim of the jibs. Whenever the mast-heads were relieved, just then the mimic sailor-men of the shadow-ship would be seen tramping up their rigging, tarrying in the tops to renew their quids, while the relieved men come down, in exact imitation of their betters.

When Jack was sent to ride down the stays in his Boson's chair, tar-bucket in hand, so the mimic ship must set her chaps to tarring down the backstays as well. If the ebony cook chanced to empty his steep-barrel over the side; lo, a blacker nigger than he would be seen doing the like over the side of the sister ship which was mirrored in the azure sea.

The helmsman had a pleasant task toying with his wheel and hugging the lubber point, while he kept the ship on her due south course, during those lustrous days. At the change of watches, a new man would come loitering aft to relieve the helm, repeat the course, "South!" after his shipmate, and grapple the spokes lazily, as he twirled the wheel aport or starboard, in languid execution of his duty. There stood the sleepy-eyed fellow, munching his quid in a brown soliloquy; his eyes roving automatically from compass to sails; or watching some slow-sailing cloud by which to keep his course; much as a coastwise sailor steers by a beacon or lighthouse, a haystack or a church, along a much familiar land.

The next to take the wheel was a bird of another feather. It was the afternoon hour when the ladies usually sat aft with their needlework or reading. There were a few men among the crew before whom they chatted freely, referred to as authority in sea matters, and always greeted kindly as they passed. Crawford was one of these, and deemed it a tall feather in his hat. It laid him under an embargo to come prinked up for the occasion, till he got to be styled a lady's man. In fact, old Tom often swapped his night work for an afternoon trick at the helm, with some lazy, untidy fellow, who was "shy o'

the wimmin folk" — their usual price being a "chaw terbaccer" to boot, which the gallant Tom readily paid for a smile or a nod from a feminine.

Though a nautical dandy of the sprucest kind, Tom was every inch a sailor; and the largest, strongest, handiest man on the Fleetwing. He was always more or less jauntily rigged. But to-day, being the "ladies' hour," he was equipped with flowing blue trowsers, a French calico shirt, with broad collar and flying ties, flowing from his thick red neck. Dancing-pumps housed his number eleven feet, for Tom was as lively at a hornpipe as the trimmest man on board.

Tom's shining tarpaulin or neat chip hat was ever listed aport with a saucy nautical tip, which showed the self-respect as well as the egotism of the man. A dainty blue ribbon bound the scuppers of his hat, with long flowing ends dangling in the wind; which further confirmed Tom's exalted esteem of himself. Yet, conceding the inordinate vanity of this old shellback, Crawford was worth any two men in the forecastle, and was loved by the captain and mate from long years of useful associations in past voyages.

It was a pleasure to see Tom handle the wheel. He dandled the mahogany spokes as daintily as a woman touches a piano. His merry blue eyes rolled sagaciously about from the compass-card to the leeches of the sails aloft. The wily fellow feels the swing of the ship before she fairly swerves, and gingerly gives her a half-spoke of the wheel to head off every attempt at deviation from her course. A ship is like a mettlesome horse, or a coquettish woman, and soon learns to yield gracefully to the master hand, which will not let her swerve.

Not a dough-head nor a duffer on board could steer the ship in a seaway like Tom. The superstitious fellows readily came to believe that the partial jade ever sought to play some prank or pirouette upon them; but would behave like a lady in the presence of her lover the instant old Tom took charge of the wheel.

The same sea-birds that had adopted the Fleetwing as their chief commissary a month previous still followed the fleet craft; though a taut rein and a sharp spur had been applied to her speed. A large white albatross, and his two demure looking mates in gray, flew round and round the ship, or tacked back and forth across the stern a thousand times a day; tireless on the wing as the full-sailed ship to which they clung. Every movement of the cook while passing in and out of the galley was watched by these greedy scavengers of the sea; which would plunge in a column of three, with a chorus of screams, upon whatever scrap of bread or meat was cast upon the water.

Two drab-colored, Quaker-looking blue-jays, and a lone man-o-'war hawk were other less notable companions of the Fleetwing. The blue-jays subsisted on the leavings of the albatross, which, though scant, attached them to the travelling household of a well ordered vessel.

The hawk made use of the ship for another purpose, and never stooped to pick up a crumb from her table. Hour after hour the motionless pinions of the dark-brown hawk hung poised over the main truck, always near enough to converse in a low crooning whistle with the lookout on the royal yard. Occasionally, when the keen-eyed hawk saw a dolphin or an albicore chase up a school

of fly-fish above the surface, then, with a shrill scream, he folded his wings and dropped like an arrow to the water, piercing his flying prey with open bill in his fall; and then mounted with his prize to the old poise in the sky, eating his fish while he flies above the mast. Thus this puny bird deigns to make a pointer dog of the ship, to start up the hidden covey from the sea.

Less than a week of steady sailing took the ship into the calm belt between the two trade winds. Two days previous to losing the breeze, great masses of pearl-colored clouds had been seen climbing steadily up over the leeward horizon, coming northward, high above the northeast wind-clouds, which swept the ship along in an opposite direction; — evidence that the ship had passed the usual limits of the northeast trades, and might soon expect the sister-wind from the southeast.

During the next several days the Fleetwing was wafted along by occasional cat's-paws, until she reached the latitude of 3° N., where every vestige of wind left her. Above the ship hung a cloudless azure, and about her lay a shimmering brass, windless and waveless, where the noonday sun blazed upon the water till it appeared like molten lead.

So hot and undimmed were the beams of the equatorial sun that it cast a yellow halo of mirage along the leeches of the sails, and about every other white object that it shone upon. The men could not touch the shrouds, when going aloft, without being smeared with hot tar. The iron rods of the futtock-shrouds were so hot that they burned the hands while climbing over the tops. The odorous pitch boiled in the deck-seams, and the

shoes stuck fast to it when one tarried a moment in his walk.

The glare reflected up from the mirrored sea scorched the shaded face as quickly as the direct rays of the sun. The hot beams blistered the paint on the bulwarks, masts, and yards; and so softened the tar in the hempen leech-ropes that the canvas edges of the sails were strained by the stretch of the bolt-ropes.

Throughout this breathless calm the vessel rolled uneasily on the low heave of a southern swell, a motion which filled the ship with a bedlam of ghostly noises above and below. Aloft, the chain sheets creaked over the yardarm sheaves and quarter blocks, clanging heavily against the under surface of the yards when the sails swayed back and forth. The clewlines cheeped noisily over their hot sheaves at the clews and quarters, while the pattering reef-points drummed a tattoo against the canvas when the topsails banged against the masts.

Below deck, bulkheads and partitions groaned with unspeakable agony. The hoarse utterance of the ship's larger timbers blended sweetly with the milder creaks of the carlines, the clatter of dishes in the pantry, and the musical jingle of the glassware in the swinging trays. The berth-boards and state-room doors murmured meekly in a timid chorus of smothered pain; an unacceptable lullaby for the watch below, which produced vocal mutterings not wholly of a prayerful nature.

The ship had got becalmed in the very birthplace of the Gulf Stream — though, strange to say, the surface drift was running to the eastward at the rate of thirty miles a day. This was the eddy, or backwater current,

running between the two western drifts of the northeast and southeast trades; a reverse equatorial stream which ends in the Bight of Biafra on the African coast.

This singular eddy was first noticed during the night, when the sea along the west side of the ship began to make a rhythmic, tuneful murmur, which greatly aroused the superstitions of the sailors. Some of the croakers said it indicated a gale. Others declared that it was a warning of a wreck, and that dead men would strew the sea before many days passed. Uncle Joe, the real oracle of the Fleetwing, looked much disturbed, but would not communicate any ghostly predictions.

In the morning it was discovered that the oily surface of the water was wrinkled as a pie-crust where it breasted against the starboard side of the ship. The current sobbed and wailed like a crying baby where it dashed against the shining copper, more especially where it glinted off from the rudder and ran away in tuneful spiral swirls.

This eastern set seemed an unfortunate event for the Fleetwing. It carried her where the V-shaped doldrums grew wider and wider, until it might take a week of Sundays to cross the calm belt. Captain Talbert wished to cross the line in longitude 30°, but the three days eastern drift took the ship into 28° 30′.

The morning of the third day rose bright and clear. Not a cloud was seen over the whole arch of heaven. Not a cat's-paw rimpled the surface of the sea. In the east, the earliest dawn-light had the effect to lift the dark horizon up into a rounded hill. Though this is known to be the work of refraction, yet one can never witness this

skyward lift of an eastern sea without deeming it supernatural.

Just before the sun appeared, the top of this eastern eminence became haloed with a double rim of green and gold. Then up flashed a dozen great spokes of a golden wheel; the short horizontal spokes glinted downward from the watery hill-top, while the vertical ones reached high up toward the zenith, as if the whole circle of heaven was required for a rim.

The undulation from the southeast was now steadily increasing, as if from a sudden movement of wind in that direction, imparting hopes that the calm would be short-lived. But for a trifling fall in the barometer, with the wild cries of the sea-birds, and the nervous flitting about of stormy petrels — a brood of which had recently gathered about the stern — one might look in vain for signs of a storm. Yet one of the fiercest hurricanes of many a year was approaching the ship.

The forenoon passed. Eight bells struck the noon hour before the first unmistakable signs of a gale dimmed the face of the day. In swift transition then the blue canopy suddenly gave place to a dull haze of sombre, sodden gray. This was quickly followed by a lowering gloom, which lifted the murky rim of the horizon, and hedged the ship about with fast-narrowing bounds, which filled the soul with awe, as of some unseen evil lurking very near at hand.

The haze which filled the upper sky was not a cloud. It was less dense than mist. It impressed one as an impalpable shadow cast by some unseen, death-dealing evil; it was an unmistakable forecast of the invisible storm.

The sea had lost its azure and taken on a dull slate-color, reflected from the ominous shadow in the sky.

Late in the afternoon, the barometer fell so fast that all the light yards were sent down, together with the three royal masts. The flying jib-boom was sent in, and the stunsail booms were lowered to the deck. The hatches were barred down, the tarpaulins put on and battened. The four boats were hoisted on the upper cranes, parbuckles were secured to them, and tackles put in the rigging ready to roll the boats bottom up if need be.

Before dark, sail was shortened to close-reefed topsails and courses. The spanker was brailed. The jib was hauled down and stowed with double gaskets. The fore and main spencers were set and examined, then brailed up again ready for use. The galley and the scuttle-butt had extra lashings put on. Every movable thing was lowered down the booby hatch, to free the deck. A strong life-line was stretched fore and aft on both sides of the deck.

Grim night set down over the ship, black as the mist which Apollo dropped over the wounded Æneas in the day of battle. It was so dark that one could not see his own length on deck. The white lower masts were just visible a fathom away. Even the mainmast and its sail dimmed away in the blackness, till all trace of spar or sail was lost half way up to the top.

The swell rose rapidly, humping up into a furious tumble ere it struck the ship, till it frothed and fumed like an angry surf. The night air now began to grow hot and sultry — a lifeless, negative atmosphere, that made one gasp for breath, almost unendurable for respiration. At length a puff of wind struck the sails while the ship lay

wallowing in the trough of the sea. The puff quickened to a breeze, — hot as from a furnace, — and the vessel luffed slowly until she took the largest swell on her port bow. This new position eased up on her rolling, but made the antic thing pitch heavily, capering about like a tethered goat.

After a long, anxious hour of this prelusive annoyance, the gale struck, coming with a thunder-gust from the south, in squalls of wind, rain, and vivid sheets of lightning, which illuminated the blackness like the outburst of a volcano. The wind shrieked, and the billows howled, as the two mad elements battered against the listed ship, intent upon her destruction. It seemed as if all the spirits of demolition were abroad on the warpath. Though the rain ceased after the first onslaught, the thunder became more terrific, — a trifle louder than the roar of the boarding seas; but that, too, passed away, and the wind took full possession.

With nothing remaining to curb their madness, the billows now toppled up into mountains of bellowing breakers. The hideous noise of the canvas when it shook in the increasing gale, the crash of the waves as they struck the bow and swept across the deck, together with the unearthly shrieks from the rigging, when heard midst such inky blackness, sounded like an orchestra of demons from Inferno, rather than the natural crescendo of earthly noises when put to their worst. It was a scene to startle the boldest seaman on board; a pandemonium sufficient to terrify a landsman till he quaked with fear and wished for the home fireside.

Captain Talbert and the mate kept the deck for several

hours, and retired to the cabin at ten o'clock, thinking the gale was at its worst, and the ship would carry her canvas through the night. The captain slipped into his swinging berth and was soon asleep, forgetful of wind, seas, and the pitching ship. The mate turned in on the soft side of his mahogany chest, booted and otherwise equipped, with oil-cloth coat and souwester, ready for a bit more fun about midnight. The barometer was still tumbling frightfully, showing that the worst had been kept in reserve. Suddenly Raymond heard the second mate yelling at the top of his deep, hoarse voice: —

"Take in the mainsail! Man the clew-garnets, and buntlines! Ease away the main-tack, when you're ready!"

Braybrook's bass notes were in such accord with the wind, that the men had not heard readily from their shelter aft under the weather-rail. His tones were a thousand notes below the shriek of the gale. Raymond sprang out, and, taking in the situation, he gave counter-orders: —

"Hold fast the main-tack! Har-r-r-d a-weather yer helm! Clew up mizzentops'il!" The mate's voice was set to a different key from Braybrook's, and it pierced through the screaming wind and the rumble of the seas like the shriek of a steam whistle.

Had the main-tack been let go at Braybrook's order, the mainyard would have snapped off in an instant. As it was, the weather-leech of the mainsail supported the yard for the clew of the topsail to tug at. Braybrook had seen evidence of an "Ox-eyed" squall coming, and had gone to work hastily, for the danger was imminent.

As soon as the mizzentopsail was clewed up, the ship

felt her helm, and swung off before the wind. The mainsail was taken in and furled; then the mizzentopsail was snugged, while the ship was kept before the gale to receive the coming squall. The first of the gale blew from the south. The squall now came from the southeast, blowing with much greater force; denoting a circular gale, working round against the hands of a clock. The ship scud well, though the waves ran up into gigantic combers, each sea topped out with an acre of foam. So high were some of the larger billows that the vessel hung in a breathless gasp, ere she rounded up over their steep declivities; and then pitched dizzily downward, with a long, never-ending plunge into the windless gulf below.

Seeing that the ship made better weather scudding than lying to, and that the storm-centre had passed to the west, Raymond took the responsibility to let her run with the gale, as the barometer was still falling, and the worst was yet to come. At daylight the wind suddenly came out east, and increased to a furious hurricane, blowing a hundred and twenty miles an hour; such a gale as the oldest seaman rarely sees in a lifetime. The whole face of the waters now put on a different appearance. The wind blew with such force that the largest seas were battered down by the mere momentum of the gale — crushed flat by dynamic wind-weight — as an Alpine avalanche might shatter a haystack.

The genuine hurricane-blast is made up of millions of small subordinate whirlwinds, that travel in the general direction of the gale, and claw up the surface in long, endless spirals of froth, which whiten the ocean into ghastly sheets of parallel foam-streaks. The rotary motion of

this wind-blown spume hurled it into the air till it struck the ship with force, as though shot from a Gatling gun.

The gale which first struck the ship, from the south, was merely an indraught of wind, on its way to the storm-centre; which was then astern of the ship, to the northeast, about a hundred miles distant. The velocity of that gale was a little over sixty miles an hour, but would increase as it neared the centre.

The second gale, which struck the ship at midnight, coming from the southeast, was blowing eighty miles an hour; and showed by its increased velocity that the storm-centre had passed the ship, and was then bearing northwest, about two hundred miles distant.

The initial velocity of the hurricane, which came from the east, at daylight, was a trifle over one hundred miles an hour, but it increased twenty miles during the next hour and a half. At which time the storm-centre was bearing west-northwest, nearly three hundred miles away; although the ship had run, during the time, one hundred miles towards it since midnight.

By these observations, it will be seen that the central circle of the storm was nearly two hundred miles in diameter; which is very large for the Equator; though in middle latitude such storm-circles are often a thousand miles across. The rotating centre moved over the surface just twenty miles an hour; which is faster than usual; from which we may infer that it had blown several days to acquire such velocity.

When this long-remembered hurricane struck the Windward Islands, six days after, it destroyed everything in its path. It expended its force near the Mona Passage,

where it strewed the neighboring shoals with many wrecks.

The Fleetwing rode out the gale like a duck in a mill-pond. She had been managed with skill, by being put on the right tack at first, so as to draw away from the storm-centre. Her running before the southeast gale after it struck did no harm, as the centre of the storm had passed, and was rotating to the west faster than the ship could sail. Running before the hurricane, till it, in turn, ran away from the ship, was the safest policy, so long as the vessel would scud, and was not approaching dangerous ground.

It had been a fair stand-up fight between the best handiwork of man and the two mad elements of wind and sea, conspiring for the destruction of the beautiful craft. All were thankful that they had had no third element, such as land, to contend with, when having such a tussle of life and death. Had the ship been bound home and imprudently steered to the northwest when the south gale struck, she might have been destroyed by plunging into the storm-centre. So, the officers had much to be thankful for that they had not been tempted into any error of management during this frightful gale.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE WRECKED SHIP.

AFTER the furious gale had passed away to the west, the barometer rose as rapidly as it had fallen. The wind dropped away to a calm, and the weather remained sultry for many hours. The monstrous seas subsided, leaving several heavy, quick-running swells rolling in from the south, the southeast, and the eastern board; all of which made the ship thrash about like a dancing Jack.

On the following morning the sun rose bright through a narrow rift in the eastern sky; and with a sudden impulse the swift-flying scud swept clear the whole firmament.

The tarpaulins were taken from the hatches, the boats let down to the lower cranes, and the life-lines, which had been stretched fore and aft, were taken down. The crew got up their wet clothing and filled the rigging with steaming garments. The cabin windows were flung open, and the cabin people gathered aft once more about the taffrail, gladdening in the welcome sunshine.

A faint air came in cat's-paws from the east, just rimpling the smooth surface in long dark streaks, here and there; creeping slyly up to the tops of the great undulations, and then scampering down into the deep, dark troughs, still shaded from the sun, and looking like droves of black mice seeking covert from the light of day.

These isolate airs increased, and soon joined hands over the whole eastern board in a veritable breeze. It came light at first, baffling about from the east, far round to the south, — over a quarter segment of the circle, — settling at length into a steady southeast trade that was cool and refreshing.

Every drawing sail was at once put upon the ship. Royal and skysail yards were sent aloft, and the sails set. A confusion of swells still rolled heavily in on the port bow — a lingering reminiscence of the hurricane, which caused the ship to bury her martingale and catheads at every plunge. This furious pitching prevented the yards being braced up sharp, so that the ship was not heading better than south, and did not make better than a south-southwest course, owing to the smart westerly current she had now run into.

At noon a meridian altitude placed the ship in 2° 30′ north latitude. The trades continued light during afternoon and evening; but during the morning watch the swell dropped away and the wind freshened up prettily. Pieces of wreckage were now frequently reported by the lookout on the bow; and once, in the dark before dawn, the ship struck her stem heavily against some floating spar — such a thump as led Braybrook to order the boxes drawn and the pump sounded.

Soon after, the lookout declared he saw a dead body ahead of the ship, but as the vessel ran over and buried the corpse, the officer did not see it, and expressed doubts about it. When day broke, a stoven boat was discovered on the weather bow, and a broken topmast was passed, with yard and a reefed sail attached, showing the wreck

was in some way owing to the recent gale. The boat was bottom up; her bow was stoven and both garboard strakes smashed in; and a sailor's pea-jacket hung from one of the splintered holes: as if that was the first accident, and the brave tar had attempted to stay the leak; and this was the sad result.

Other broken spars, and parts of a recent wreck continued in view for hours; trailing away to the south, in the direction the ship was sailing. Such sad havoc told of fatal results, and kept the watch below up and alert; and all hands were excited, wearing a look of alarm upon their faces. Officers and men climbed upon the yards, eager to behold the wrecked vessel from which so much floating débris had been ravished. Parts of three masts had been seen, so they looked for nothing but a waterlogged hulk.

As longitude had not been obtained on the previous afternoon, — the sun being obscured at the proper time, — the exact position of the ship had not been known since the day before the hurricane. At nine o'clock, much to Captain Talbert's surprise, St. Paul's Rock appeared directly ahead of the ship. This determined their longitude to be 29° 22′ west, instead of forty miles to the east, as the dead-reckoning placed them. This discrepancy arose from some unusual variation in the currents.

It was at once concluded that the wreck would be found stranded upon St. Paul. The Rock was then not more than twelve miles distant. It consists of a small cluster, with two pointed peaks which are not more than thirty-five feet above the sea — a projection of hard volcanic trachyte, making up from the very northern end of a southern plateau, of which St. Helena and Ascension are more con-

spicuous evidence. St. Paul is as spindling as a church steeple, far down beneath the sea; for the soundings near about the Rock measure thirteen thousand five hundred feet. There the bottom water is found at a temperature of 32° Fahr. — the coldest water in the whole middle Atlantic.

This most extreme frigidity of the bottom water found in the torrid zone is caused by curious phenomena. It is well known that wherever a warm ocean-current is obstructed by impinging upon a coast-line, the effect is to produce latent heat; as at northern Norway, and in the bight of Alaska. But it is not so well known that a frigid Austral and an Arctic current, meeting directly under the Equator, tend to produce latent cold; greater even than is found anywhere else in mid-ocean.

The strong upward rebound of these two polar sub-currents, when thus meeting, head to head, has the effect to create a vast mountain of ice-water, directly under the Equator; nearly twelve thousand feet high; and that, too, in a zone where the surface water maintains the temperature of 80° Fahr. throughout the year.

As the Fleetwing approached St. Paul from the north, the bow of a large vessel was seen wedged in high and dry, between two vertical points of rock. This was the only part of the wreck which could be seen from the north. The bowsprit was the only spar remaining; the masts must have gone by the board when she struck.

In about an hour the ship passed to the south of the Rock, running very close in. Then it was discovered that the wrecked vessel had broken in two, amidships, just forward of the mainmast. The stern-end of the ship had

sunk and wholly disappeared. The bow-half had run in on the top of a vast breaker, and was firmly fastened between two high pinnacle-rocks, which held her immovable; though her after part tipped down into the water at an angle of fifteen degrees. This slanting position had compelled the whole forward cargo to disgorge into the sea, and float away; leaving the between-decks and lower hold open to the inrolling breakers; the return wave washing out everything which was movable within.

The stoven long-boat still remained alongside, held fast by a strong painter, secured to the main chains, the only vestige of a boat to be seen. Looking from the mizzen top, with a glass, several dead sailors were seen wedged under the thwarts, and some of the seamen's bags and clothing were swashing about in the boat. Twenty-two other bruised and bloated bodies were cast upon the jutting rocks, near the bow of the ship, several of which were females. Two of these, a mother and daughter, were locked hand in hand, a piteous testimony of affection in a death so filled with horror.

With the exception of a yelping dog, — a pretty King Charles spaniel, — which ran about from one corpse to another, howling his dismal plaint of death, not a vestige of life could be seen. The forward deck-house remained on the wreck, intact, poised high and dry above the reach of the highest breaker; though every comber ran headlong into the 'tween-decks and the hold. Had the crew remained by the wreck, instead of attempting to debark by boats, they would have fared better, and had a longer lease of life.

As it was deemed impossible to board the wreck, on

account of the furious surf, which broke far out, and rose into gigantic combers, the mate suggested that a cannon should be fired, to arouse any one in the deck-house, if by chance a living person were there. This was thought by all present to be a useless precaution, as there was no signal flying from the splintered stump of the foremast, which stuck up twenty feet above the house, and would be the first thing thought of by a stranded sailor. But as the captain made no objection, Braybrook lent a hand to get out one of the six-pound cannon, while Raymond sent the steward to get up the powder, and himself filled the cartridges.

After a deal of trouble the swollen tompkin was got out of the muzzle, the gun swabbed out and loaded; receiving a double-sized oakum wad, to make it "speak." Applying a finer grade of powder for priming, the gun was ready for use. As the ship had forged ahead some distance, she was now tacked back to the north, and ran close in, fairly to windward of the wreck.

The gun was elevated, pointed at the wreck and fired; with the result of waking the echoes among the rocks, and making a dull ghostly boom emerge from the caverned hull. The burning wad was seen to strike the deck; and being of tarry hemp, with a layer of tow next the powder, it soon fanned into a flame and set fire to the windward side of the deck-house, against which it lay. This incident was deemed of no importance, as the big uproar of the gun had not startled even a gull from the Boson's deserted tenement.

Standing on past the Rock, to the north, for a last look about in that direction, the ship was again tacked back to

the south; running close in along the edge of the breakers, for a last sorrowing look at the wreck, and her score of dead seamen. The windward side of the deck-house was blazing briskly as the Fleetwing returned, and tongues of flame began to burst from several of the windows, showing that the fire had found combustible material within, to make such headway; and would soon consume all of the wreck above water.

The cannon was put back in its place, and lashed. The fore and main tacks were boarded, and the ship kept away a point free, on her course. With tears in their eyes, the captain and the ladies stood on the weather quarter, viewing the sad sight of a broken vessel and the unburied dead.

Suddenly the shriek of a woman was heard, coming loud and shrill, as of a person in mortal anguish or abject fear. The voice outrang the roar of the breakers, and pierced the ear with repeated cries; breasting against the wind like the sharp notes of a fife. All eyes were turned upon the wreck, but not a soul could be seen. Perhaps the men were right in declaring that it was but the ghost of the dead, who would continue to shriek till the wreck was consumed, and the dead were demolished by the birds. Tom had known many such things, he said, in his time; and old Ben backed him up by knowing many more such cases than his shipmate.

The cries ceased, and three minutes passed before the mystery was solved. A young girl was then seen rushing out of the port door of the deck-house, drawing after her a tottering, white-haired man, whom she was trying to pull out of the flaming sepulchre. Both were bare-headed

and scantily clad, as if they had been hastily driven from the berths in their night-clothes.

The heroic girl succeeded in drawing the old man toward that part of the bow which seemed least exposed to the flame, which now rose roaring twenty feet above them. Seizing upon a ringstopper, which hung from the port cathead, and trailed down the steep deck, the active girl supported her companion while she steadily worked her way up to the windlass; where they found partial shelter for the moment behind the bitts. While they tugged away at the big rope, the long black hair of the one and the thin silvery locks of the other streamed in the wind like a blended banner of death and peace — emblematic of what awaited them.

Once beyond the windlass-bitts, where they could lean and rest, the girl put the hair from the old man's eyes and together they stood, aghast; watching the cruel flame eat its way along the house-top, and seize upon the splintered stump of the foremast, which lay in its path, and then begin to scorch the bowsprit-bitts; while occasionally the long tongues of flame reached far out over their heads, writhing about in the wind with the contortions of a serpent reaching for its prey.

Thus far the wrecked ones had not discovered the Fleetwing, which just then hove about in stays. Brailing up the courses, the captain headed the ship back toward the wreck; but without the least idea that anything could be done to rescue the two unfortunates from death. What to do to save them, no one had conjectured. The captain finally suggested that a raft should be built and floated in to the wreck.

"But, sir," demanded Raymond, "how are a young girl and an old man to get down upon your raft, should you succeed in drifting it alongside of that high wreck?"

"True enough, I don't think they could."

A look of horror was upon the faces of all as they watched the increasing flame, fanned by the wind, and licking its way steadily along into the bow, which would soon be ablaze and consumed. One and another burst out in exclamations of pity:—

"It's a terrible thing to stand here and see a young girl roasted like a pig. But a boat can't live a minute in such a surf as that," suggested Braybrook, showing a deal of tender-heartedness, as he contemplated the certain destruction by fire of the wrecked victims.

"A boat must and shall live to reach that wreck," replied the mate, impulsively. "It will likely be stoven when boarding the wreck, and can never return. But we can put out the fire and save those people from being burnt alive, and we shall be there to help them upon the raft when you drift it in to us."

Ever prompt to follow his own impulses, Raymond sprang upon the cabin deck and yelled to the men:—

"Aft here, every soul of you, and clear away my boat!" The crew quickly gathered amidships, with a puzzled look of amazement upon their faces; then the mate again addressed them: "Men, who among you will volunteer to go to that wreck with me?"

Among the twenty men clustered there beneath the fierce eye of the mate, were several brave souls as ever manned a yard or tackled a fighting whale. But not a voice responded to the wild scheme of boating over break-

ers twenty feet high, surf which ran headlong upon jagged rocks, or against the splintered end of a broken wreck. Huge Tom Crawford folded his arms and compressed his lips into a resolute — No ! But his calm blue eye did not waver before the savage look of his loved young officer; a look which smote upon old Ben, so that he and others slunk sheepishly back into the rear of their more resolute shipmate.

When Raymond sprang upon the house and gave his order, Captain Talbert hastily exchanged convictions with the second and third mates, who agreed that a boat was out of the question; but a raft might possibly succeed. Then he went to the mate, ready to refuse him a boat, if he got a volunteer crew; but luckily no answer came to Raymond's crazy request. With a look of scorn, the young officer turned his back upon the crew, too indignant to speak; and appealed to the captain to know what could be done: —

"Is there nothing we can do to save those people?"

"Rig up a light-floating raft; 'tis the best we can do. Try to drift it up into the 'tween-decks of the wreck. A boat can't live a minute in such surf."

"But, captain, how can those frightened creatures get down to your raft?"

"There must be a hatchway for'ard of the deck-house," continued the captain.

"Very likely, but they can't approach the house while it is burning that way. The poor wretches will be roasted alive before that fire is ended." And the mate strode back and forth on the house-top with his lips quivering with emotion.

"They are sheltering themselves behind the windlass-bitt, and the house will be burnt up, out of their way in a half hour's time."

"Perhaps you are right, sir. We'll try the raft, and may God spare their lives till we can reach them."

"No one will be willing to go in on the raft. The wrecked folks must get down upon it themselves."

"I'll go in on the raft! and shame the cowardly clowns who refused to man my boat, and save a woman from death."

"No, no; I'd rather you wouldn't take such risk, my son."

"Oh, sir, don't refuse my making an effort to save those poor creatures. Why, captain, I should hate myself ever after, if I did not risk something at such a time," appealed the mate, with persuasive voice, and tears in his eyes.

"Boy, I love you too well to *consent* to your going on that raft, for you risk certain death. But, if you will go, I shall not forbid you; for the Almighty has already snatched you from more dangers and deaths than I've 'scaped from in fifty years past; and I will give you into his keeping, and trust to your luck if you will go."

"God bless you, captain! I'll go, whatever the risk: and I'm sure to save them, if they don't burn up before I get there." Raymond turned to the men and gave his orders, loud and fast: —

"Off main hatches, there! and get up four slim, three-barrel casks. Cooper and helpers! get out your hammers and drivers, ready to becket the casks. Mr. Bailey, get up a topgallant-sail from the sail-room. Mr. Braybrook, cut me sixteen lengths of new, inch-hemp rope, for

the beckets; and have Morey put two lines into your boat, to slack the raft in with. Tom, get me four stun-sail-booms to make a raft of, and a set of halyards to lash them with. Hoogley, get ready two short warps, the lantern keg, and two deck buckets ready to go on the raft, and two sealskin buoys."

As all realized the need of despatch, it is needless to say that every part of this work was executed with utmost celerity and care. Off went the hatches, and not waiting for a tackle to hoist with, strong men leaped down between-decks and boosted up the four casks. In three minutes the cooper's hammers were heard knocking off the quarter hoops, ready to receive the beckets. In half an hour the four casks were lashed firmly together, to which a frame-work of the four booms was secured. Over this, a strong, new topgallant-sail was fastened to the booms, one half of the sail being left loose, for the purpose of covering over their live freight when coming out against the surf.

In the meantime the ship had taken a position fair to windward of the wreck, as near in to the surf as it was prudent to go, and there let drop a kedge anchor, with a two-inch rope hawser attached, by which the boat was to anchor while slacking in, and hauling off the raft.

When all was ready, twenty men seized upon the buoyant raft and tossed it into the sea, landing it fairly upon its bottom with a splash. It was then hauled alongside, and the mate sprang down upon it, receiving and securing the several things he wished to take, such as buckets, buoys, lantern keg, ropes, hachet, and knife.

As Raymond gave the word to slack away, and the

waist-boat's men gathered in upon the two new towlines, by which Braybrook was to hold the raft, John Kanaka leaped upon the taffrail, and asked the mate if he wanted help. Miss Allston and Mrs. Talbert had shamed this brown water-fowl into proffering his services, and the two ladies stood there with streaming eyes, waving their kerchiefs to the young officer as he drifted away from the ship.

"Yes, John, I would like one of the Fleetwing's boys to show that they are not all cowards. But I can't stop for you; you must jump overboard and swim."

Over went the lithe Kanaka, and climbed upon the raft, just as the waist-boat hauled it out to her anchorage. To Braybrook's question: —

"Are you ready for me to slack away, sir?"

"First give me two of your paddles to quicken our drift, and guide us on the crest of the breakers," replied Raymond. "Now pay out your lines!" adding, as the raft began to forge ahead before the wind and current, "My signal to 'snub your line' will be *one* paddle-blade in the air. Signal to 'haul line,' shall be *two* paddles in the air, or a shirt waved from the wreck."

"Ay, ay, sir! God speed you, Mr. Raymond." And Braybrook waved an affectionate farewell to his young superior, whom he had almost hated a month before. Tom, Ben, and others of the boat's crew sent their blessings after him; while aboard the ship, the men ran up the rigging, and cheered the brave act which they dared not emulate. The captain waved his spyglass from the mizzen-top, where he had stationed himself to watch his loved young mate till the death-struggle was over, as he had no

hope of his reaching the wreck alive. From near the round-house two little hands were seen waving their white kerchiefs with a jerky, hysterical motion; they, too, were bidding a final adieu to one most dear to them. To these last, Raymond waved his hat, and kissed his hand, just as the fore end of his raft began to lift upon the first quick upheaval of a monstrous breaker.

Standing, paddle in hand, steadying himself by one of his life-lines, Raymond was seen to cast his last look at the ship, and dwell a moment on the low-lying sun, as if the first serious thought of his danger had dawned upon his mind. From that moment his whole attention was given to managing his raft.

Up rose the massive comber, higher and higher, cresting up into a long line of breaking, bursting foam, hissing and roaring as if the whole ocean had gone mad. The surf seized upon the raft as 'twere in the maw of some living monster, shaking, pitching, tossing the buoyant float about, as if it were bent upon hurling it end over end, down the steep forefront of the breaker, into the smooth, shining trough made dismal by shadow, in the low-lying sun.

For a full round minute the raft held just the right tip down over the howling crest of the breaker; and Raymond and his companion stood on their feet, the master spirits of the scene. Before them rolled a half-score of galloping outriders, leaping, loping, tossing their white manes in the sun, till its waning beams gilded the froth and spume of the surf into gold.

Finding that the raft was driving away to the starboard hand of the wreck, Raymond gave the word, and the two

paddles were set desperately to work, bringing their craft into line of the desired landing. This was a delicate task, as they must keep to the top of the surf; for to drop back and be overtaken by a following breaker, would be certain destruction.

Little by little their object was accomplished, and they saw the foremost breakers, one after another, flounder in upon the wreck, or the adjacent rock; shattering to pieces with an angry howl, almost stunning to the ear. Observing at the last moment that the top of the higher breakers, like that on which they rode, would dash the raft against the upper deck, Raymond up with his one paddle-blade and signalled, "Snub the line." Slowly the two lines tautened till the raft dropped back ten feet from the higher crest. Then the paddle-blade was withdrawn; and the raft drove fair in upon the 'tween-decks, heaving up fifty feet into the dark cavern, beyond the utmost send of the sea.

Leaping out, the two heroes secured their craft to the foremast, which they found by groping about on the dark deck. They then peered about further forward, to find the fore hatch. Luckily for them it was not barred. By their combined effort, one half of the hatch was pushed from the combings, and exposed the forward end of the burning house, which still blazed furiously; evidently feeding upon tarred ropes, or a tar barrel, in the Boson's locker.

At first it was too hot for Raymond to pass up the hatchway without being burned. Happily the strong updraught from the hatchway had the effect to swerve the roaring flame away from the girl; and by freshening the

blaze helped to expend the combustible material all the quicker.

In fifteen minutes the whole forward end of the house tumbled in, falling to the deck and sending part of the burning brands down the hatchway. Raymond sent the Kanaka to fill one of the buckets, from the raft, with which he put out the charred remains as they fell; and then began to throw water up the hatchway till the fire was dimmed down overhead.

Climbing up the foot-cleats on the stanchion, Raymond sprang up the hatch, followed by John. Running to the windlass end, he there found the brave girl kneeling down over the prostrate man, vainly striving to protect him from the heat. One side of her hair was badly singed; her right cheek, ear, and neck were blistered. While across her back and right shoulder, parts most exposed, the night dress and under-wear were so badly burned that they had fallen away, leaving the girl's bare flesh burnt to a crust.

Horrified at what he beheld, Raymond snatched off his thin coat and laid it tenderly over the head and shoulders of the girl. This was the first intimation she had of his presence. With a languid effort, she raised her head and met the gaze of her rescuer. Uttering a cry of surprise, and delight at seeing a human being standing beside her, she continued with a piteous appeal for her parent:—

"Oh, sir! save my father, my beloved father! and I will bless you all the days of my life."

"Yes, poor girl, I am going to save you both."

"How can you? What power have you to save us? Father, father! do you hear what this brave man says?

He will save you. You shall not be burnt alive." She helped the weak old man to raise his head; and he looked up at Raymond with a vacant stare; shaking his head with a disconsolate negative, saying: —

"No, no, Nellie; he cannot save us. Burning or starvation is our lot. 'Tis the will of the Heavenly Father, as I have told you, and we must not murmur. He is a good young man, to wish to do us a service, but he ought not to promise what he cannot fulfil." The dazed old gentleman dropped his head back upon his hands, exhausted by the effort he had made to talk.

"Father is right; he understands all about the sea. He has said no boat could ever pass the surf to reach us." Her lips quivered, and tears came into her soft dark eyes at the thought of her father's dying such a death."

"Don't despair; we've got a raft below in the ship here; and we must get you and your father below quickly, or night will overtake us." And Raymond glanced at the sun, which was just then pierced by a western pinnacle of the Rock; the two halves of the setting orb glared red and opaque upon the little group, every particle of hope and warmth gone out of its beams.

"Tell me what to do, noble man, and I will do your bidding. Only promise to save my precious parent, for my life is as nothing to his."

"Yes, yes, you brave girl, I promise to save you both. But you must be up and doing. First, we must get your father down between-decks."

The girl sprang up, almost as if she was not maimed by the cruel flames. The coat fell from her bare, burnt shoulder. Raymond picked it up, and helped her put it on,

tenderly as a loving mother could do, for she shrank with a nervous shudder at having her crisped back touched by the garment, though not a murmur escaped her lips.

By the use of a short warp, Raymond made a Boson's chair and placed it under the old man, tying him to it; and then lowered him down the hatchway. John stood ready to take him, with orders to place the frail old gent on the upper side of a large wooden knee, till the raft was ready to launch.

Then the girl was got into the chair, and made ready to lower down in the same way. But when Raymond discovered that the feet and limbs of the delicate creature were bare, having on nothing but her night-dress, he called up the Kanaka to lower her down, and himself went below to receive her. Taking her tenderly in his arms, — to avoid touching her burnt side, — he took her directly to the raft. Holding her until John came to lift back the loose part of the sail, Raymond placed her in the middle of the raft, where the stretched canvas did not touch the casks beneath, making her as comfortable as he could.

He then went and got her father, groping about in the dark as best he could, for the light from the fore-hatchway seemed suddenly to have departed. Having placed the old man beside his daughter, on the side opposite her burns, he lashed them both securely; then the sail was placed smoothly over them, leaving their faces bare for the time, but with a fold of canvas ready to draw wholly over them when entering the surf.

The steep slant of the 'tween-decks prevented Raymond from seeing the ship or the outer world. The mouth of

their dark cavern pointed down into the water, at an angle of fifteen degrees, and was wholly submerged by every inrolling breaker; so that it was necessary to go on deck to signal the ship to haul them off. Some minutes before all was made ready for a launch, they noticed that the tumult without was increasing. Though the noise of the surf was almost deafening at the best, yet there was evidence that bad was being made worse. The breakers drove in higher than before, lifting the raft till it thumped hard on the deck, while it almost crushed their living freight against the beams overhead, till they were compelled to haul the raft up nearer to the foremast. Besides, the darkness had suddenly become impenetrable, though Raymond could not believe that the sun had set.

When Raymond climbed up the hatchway to show his two paddle-blades as a signal for Braybrook to haul out the raft, he was dismayed to find the Fleetwing hidden from view by a fierce black squall of wind and rain. The surf was so increased by the wind and sea that it was now made too dangerous to encounter even if the squall should pass quickly away, which there was no prospect of its doing. This was a sad mishap, as it was nearly sunset and a night spent in the damp hold would greatly add to the suffering of his weak charge, both of whom were starving, and one sick and feverish from her burns.

With a sad heart, Raymond sheltered himself from the rain behind the charred stump of the foremast, and waited for the squall to pass away. But the rain continued, night set in dark and gloomy, and all hope for the time

was gone. Going below, the mate announced the state of things to his companions, assuming as cheerful tones as he could, while he set about preparing to pass a long, dismal night in the noisy cavern.

Groping about on the raft, he found the lantern-keg, knocked off the hoops with his hatchet, and took out the head. Carefully taking out some ship-bread, and a tin can of soup, he came to the boat-lantern, in which he found a candle and matches. Lighting a match, he lit his candle and hung up the lantern to the carline overhead. The small glimmer was just sufficient to eat by, but rather had the effect to increase the sense of gloom in their surroundings.

Sending John to fill one of the buckets with rain water which still poured in a deluge down the hatchway, Raymond laid out enough ship-bread for passengers and crew, and then headed up the rest to keep it from the rats, which swarmed about them.

When John returned with the water, the mate opened the can of prepared soup, and induced the old gentleman to sip sparingly of the palatable liquid, and to nibble all he could from a biscuit soaked in water. This had the effect to visibly improve the parent, and Raymond then turned his attention wholly to the daughter.

The poor girl had become faint and sick, in high fever, from the dreadful condition of her burns and her starved state. Not having any utensil in which to thin down the soup, Raymond induced her to take first a swallow of water, followed by one of soup, though but a little of the latter could be allowed her while the fever was present. It was the first morsel of food that the two unfortunates had

tasted for the past two days, and it greatly refreshed and strengthened them. John and the mate made their supper of bread and water, keeping the remainder of the soup for the wrecked ones. The soup-can was slung by ropeyarns and suspended to an overhead beam, to keep it from the rats, now made furious by the smell of food.

CHAPTER XXV.

A NIGHT ON THE WRECK.

IT became a matter of anxiety to Raymond how the long night was to be passed on the wreck. The constant inrush of the surf, aside from its hideous noise, kept up a cold, damp draught, which chilled even a healthy person to the bone. How the sick ones were to endure it remained to be seen.

The father, happily, was clothed in a warm flannel night-gown, stockings, and drawers. But the delicately nurtured girl, having had more forethought for her aged father than for herself, on the night of the wreck, had rushed to her parent's state-room in a thin night-dress and light upper-wear, having on nothing to protect her lower extremities.

The mate's heart ached to think of her exposed condition, and he set about devising the best division he could make of his own clothing. Going quietly away in the dark, he divested himself of his own under-wear. Taking his drawers, stockings, and under-shirt to the girl, Raymond bade her put them on, while John and he went on deck for half an hour, to observe the weather.

The two men climbed up the hatchway, pleased to find the squall had passed away, leaving a light wind with bright starlight overhead; but the surf was still much

heavier than when the raft came in. The ship's light could be distinguished in the offing, which served to cheer the lonely situation on the wreck. While they stood whiling away the time, watching the larger star-beams glitter like mimic suns in the foaming crests of the breakers, a sudden light flashed across the long line of surf and lit up the slanting deck on which they stood.

Their shipmates were making a big flare of scraps; a signal showing their anxiety about the absent ones on the wreck. The mate understood what was wanted, but just how to answer his friends was difficult to conceive. Raking about among the charred remains of the deck-house, he found some smouldering embers which had escaped the deluge of rain. Bidding John gather some unburnt pieces of the house, they succeeded in making quite a blaze. Enough to satisfy their friends, for they soon began to swing their great iron-hoop cradle back and forth with the chain by which it hung from the mainyard, until the oily scraps doubled their volume of light. This was followed by a ringing cheer, which came echoing along over the breakers, gladdening the hearts for whom it was uttered.

Putting out the deck-fire, the two went below for the night. Raymond's thoughts were alert; he was distressed to know how to contribute to the comfort of his charge, especially the poor maimed girl. The young thing was flushed with fever, and crying with pain, when Raymond returned. She had succeeded in robing herself in all but the stockings, after a painful effort that made her sick and faint beyond endurance. She had broken the crusts in several places from her burnt back and shoulder. She sat holding the stockings in her hands, having failed, after

repeated efforts, to put them on. As Raymond took his seat by her side, and tested her feverish pulse, the girl's lips quivered with emotion, and a fresh burst of tears came from her eyes.

"Oh, sir, I have tried so hard to do your bidding, but truly I cannot reach my feet," and she buried her face in her hands.

"You poor sick girl, I ought not to have left you to do it alone. I thought perhaps you would rather do it, if you could."

Raymond put the stockings on; and then prepared a brace for his back with the paddles at the lower end of the raft, so that he could sit up and hold the girl, as it impeded her heart action to lie down, and made her dizzy and nauseated. The old gentleman was greatly affected at the tenderness and thoughtfulness of his preserver, and he crept forward and grasped the mate's hands, and blessed him; declaring that if they were preserved, Raymond should never need follow the sea again.

The exertion which the old man had made, together with his nervous emotion, gave him a chill. Raymond bade John snuggle up to the old gent, and spend the whole time rubbing his back, chafing his hands, and imparting to him the grateful *lomi-lomi* of the Polynesians, at which John was an adept.

Having fixed the brace for his back, and raised the sail so as to shelter them all from the cold indraught, Raymond took the girl in his arms, and sought the easiest sitting position he could find for the night. He held her so that her burnt side, shoulder, and face would not be touched by anything. Responding to her fevered call for

water, he bathed her hot forehead frequently; and the girl and her father became quite easy after an hour's rest.

As there was no disposition in any of them to sleep, Raymond asked how the ship came to be wrecked, what her name was, where she was from, and who they were, — taking this means to divert their attention from the dismal situation.

The father began the story of their disaster, but soon bade the daughter finish, as talking tired him greatly.

"The ship was the Washington Allston, Captain Walbridge, of Boston. She is owned by my brother, Robert Lawrence, and myself. I went out to Calcutta in her for my health, and my daughter Nellie insisted on keeping me company, and sorry work we have made of it. We were overtaken by the hurricane in the afternoon; shortened sail for scudding, and ran the ship dead before it, thinking we were well to the east of St. Paul. We knew nothing of our danger till we struck, and the masts went by the board. The ship broke in two soon after, and every soul but ourselves is dead. Here we are; and what possessed you to come through this surf, Heaven only knows. I understand the sea, my young friend, and know it is impossible to go through these breakers alive; but I honor you for your courage and humanity, and we will both bless you with our latest breath." He sank back exhausted, and motioned to Nellie to tell the rest of the story. But Raymond interrupted her by saying: —

"I came in here, Mr. Lawrence, because I knew I could save you. Keep up your spirits a little longer, and to-morrow we'll give it a good try."

A sickly smile passed over the old man's face, as he replied: —

"You are too enthusiastic, sir. We might as well starve to death as go into the surf and drown. I saw from the first that you were of those devil-me-care fellows who don't know danger when they see it. It's a good quality for sea-life, and you are just the man I would choose for captain of my best ship. Pray, what ship are you from, and what is your name, my young friend?" and he ceased talking, from sheer prostration.

"My name is Raymond, mate of the Fleetwing, of New Bedford." Turning to Nellie, who lay restfully reclining on his arm, he continued his questions: "How came you two all alone on the wreck, Miss Lawrence?"

"I'll tell you, noble sir"; and the girl fixed her large black eyes on Raymond's face, as she brushed away the tears. "I had best go back to where father left off. After the ship struck, and the awful crash had ceased in a measure, I sprang from my berth and ran into father's state-room. He was up and just coming to find me, that we might die together, as he said; for he knew that we had run on to the pitiless rocks of St. Paul. In a moment, Captain Walbridge came, and said: —

"'The ship's back is broken! Run for'ard to the deck-house, quick, or you are lost! The whole stern is breaking off, and slowly sinking under water. Run, both of you!'

"The captain threw father's overcoat over me, and hurried us on deck. The steward helped father along, and the captain took me forward into the house. The broken deck was just held on one side by the plankshear as we

passed, and it broke away and buried in the surf an instant after. The Boson and Chips cleared out their berths for us, and Captain Walbridge insisted upon our both getting in for better protection. Most of the deck-watch were swept overboard when the ship struck, for not one was found on deck when the captain came out.

"When the gale passed away, there were but ten men left out of twenty-four. The captain, second mate, and Boson thought the long-boat might be launched, and perhaps we could escape in it. The boat was unlashed and slipped safely into the water, and all got into her but the captain, who remained behind to help father and me in. Just as father was being lowered over the side, a great surf overwhelmed the boat and stove her; and we saw the crew drowned before our eyes. We were helped back to the house, and in an hour after Captain Walbridge went mad. Sometimes in his worst frenzy he took father for the mate, and threatened to kill him. The captain attributed our disaster to the wrong longitude given by the mate on the day before the gale, being himself sick at the time.

"Having nothing to eat, and no water, we suffered from hunger and thirst. The captain drank freely of sea-water, and became more crazy, until we expected to be killed by him; as he still insisted that father was the mate, and that I was urging him on to wreck the ship. For an hour he ran shrieking about the deck, looking in at the windows, or spying in at the door; declaring that he should soon have a warrant to kill us both. At length, after a more dreadful outcry than usual, he ran and jumped overboard; floundered in the surf a moment, and sank. And we two were left here to die together in peace.

"This afternoon I was aroused from sleep by the crackle of flames, and the heat of fire which had blistered my cheek while I slept. I sprang up and found the whole end of the house in a blaze. Arousing father, we ran out and climbed up the steep deck to the windlass. There we knelt down and prayed God to spare us prolonged torture. We strove to wait patiently while being burned to death. The pain was at first hard to bear, but it became more endurable as it became more severe. I was prepared to die, only asking that father and I might die together. When you came, I thought I was almost dead. I had swooned several times, and believed it would soon be over. This is all, and I fear it is the end. I was not pleased at first with your coming. How could the Heavenly Father let you come here to die with us? — so brave and good as you have shown yourself — as if two were not enough to die such a death as this!"

The girl had tired herself by the intensity with which she told her story. Her head sank upon her chest, and she burst into sobs and tears, leaning heavily upon Raymond as if she would faint. He reached out for the water and induced her to drink, and, pouring some into his hand, he bathed her forehead. He spoke soothing words to her, and made restful passes about her head, and endeavored to instil his own belief of their being saved in the morning.

Mr. Lawrence had dropped to sleep restful as an infant, snuggled up to John Kanaka; the faithful fellow had done his work well. Raymond drew Miss Lawrence's attention to the look of repose on her father's face, and bade her copy her parent's example, as she would need all

her strength and resolution to undergo the rescue on the coming day. The weak, confiding girl dried her tears, and struggled hard to suppress her sighs; trying her best to do as she was bidden. Nestling herself into an easier position, in half an hour she too was in a sweet, painless sleep, which continued till three o'clock in the morning.

Raymond sat there tending his sacred charge through all that dismal night. John had dropped to sleep before midnight; but as he still clung fast to his charge in a way to insure warmth, he was left to his slumber. It was a wonder how any one could sleep midst the ceaseless roar of the breakers, together with their swash and floundering about the raft. The crashing swells rolling up into the lower hold forced the imprisoned air into the bow, till it gushed up between the frame-timbers, and through all the small crannies opened in the deck-seams; whistling in shrill fife-notes, and shrieking hideously, in the voice of a thousand demons.

Add to this unearthly tumult of the sea, the din of a hundred hungry rats squealing about the raft, attracted by the smell of food. A dozen at a time would spring upon the raft, so famished that they would fight and tear each other. It required Raymond's constant watchfulness to prevent their springing upon his sleeping companions; especially were the starving rodents intent upon inspecting Nellie's dainty feet; and the smell of her roasted shoulder made them frantic for a meal upon such a dainty.

At length, a large rat suddenly seized upon a toe of the sleeping Kanaka, eliciting a yell that should have sent them to their holes; instead, the smell of blood induced a

dozen others to spring upon John's foot, and leg, requiring blows and kicks, together with some ingenious Kanaka expletives, to drive them off. The brutes were crazed with hunger, and a weak person would have been devoured in spite of feeble resistance. There was no more sleep for John. The superstitious fellow was in a panic, with rat-fright. The glaring eyes of the little beasts struck horror to the soul of this Polynesian nobleman. Though John was a tabued chief in his own land, here was a set of cannibals having no respect for the dread tabu of Polynesia.

Raymond lay watching the candle burn low in its socket, wondering how he should protect his charge against the rats in the dark. Just before the candle expired, Miss Lawrence waked, refreshed and strengthened by her sleep; but terribly sore and numb over all her burnt side. Raymond induced her to seek some new position. He prompted her to lay her burned side fair against him, for it had become cold and stiffened by the dampness. Though the least movement pained her greatly, the grateful girl nestled up to her protector again, as he directed; and once more slept at short intervals in the darkness, till a vestige of light gleamed up through the water into the hold, and announced the new day. Then Raymond laid his charge gently down by her sleeping father, bade John keep off the rats, and himself climbed up the hatchway, to prospect for the coming rescue.

When day dawned, the Fleetwing was seen a mile away to windward. She was just keeping off before the wind when Raymond discovered her, and would soon be in position to renew their work. The waist-boat had been

left anchored through the night; and now lay about a ship's length outside of the breakers. Raymond watched the ship run down and round to near the waist-boat, lower the bow-boat, and put ten strong men into the anchored boat, ready to haul out the raft at a signal given from the wreck.

Springing below, the mate got his passengers into position to embark; feet to the breakers, with the sail drawn over their heads, as on the previous day; so that the breaking comb of the surf would roll over the sail without sweeping away those beneath. When father and daughter were securely lashed to the raft, a life-line was rigged for John and himself to cling to, as they designed to remain outside of the sail and breast the rollers as best they could. The excitement of preparation made the sick girl faint and hysterical; and as the old gentleman was also in low spirits, thinking their last hour had come, Raymond thought best to delay their departure, and fortify both passengers and crew with breakfast.

While John opened the lantern-keg and got out some ship-bread, the mate took down the soup-can and doled out the rich nourishment to the privileged ones of his little craft; himself and the one-man crew partaking hastily of hardtack and water; not being above drinking from the pail where fifty thirsty rats had been before them. But as the dainty passengers had not lain awake to observe this, the water was as palatable as ever to them. The breakfast, together with the brief delay, and Raymond's cheerful re-assurance, had the desired effect. Miss Lawrence promised to trust implicitly to the brave words of their protector; while the less trusting father continued

to murmur parting messages to his daughter, and call upon God to remember the noble humanity of this young man, who had bravely come to die with them, in his vain attempt to rescue.

When all was ready, Raymond sent the Kanaka on deck to display the two paddles, and wait a response from ship or boat; with orders to then hasten down and take his place on the raft. John was gone about a minute and a half, when the ropes began to steadily tauten. As he saw the required signals from both ship and boat, he sprang down the hatchway with undue haste, in fear of being left behind.

Standing on the raft, hatchet in hand, ready to cut the fasts which held their little craft to the foremast, Raymond watched patiently until three large, continuous breakers had rolled in upon them, and spent their force; and then cut the fasts. The two towlines had previously been brought to a severe strain, and when the stern fasts parted, at a stroke from the hatchet, the raft grated an instant on the deck, and started on its way. Following quickly down on the last retreating sea, which compelled them to duck low to clear the upper deck, the raft shot well out clear of the wreck before the next surf rolled in upon them.

She rode over the next inrolling comber like a duck! It was then deemed the test wave of their perilous enterprise, and they had survived it. This was rightly construed from the boat as well as the ship, where the whole rigging was lined with their shipmates; from whom a yell of the wildest delight broke forth, and ran echoing down over the long reach of water, merry as marriage-bells. It was the welcome outpouring of thirty hearts for a brave

man's act, carrying a note of inspiration alike to the rescued and the rescuers.

Seeing that the next several breakers were undersized, Raymond stooped and lifted the sail from the faces of his passengers, and let the morning sun beam in upon the frightened ones. The old man's eyes met the mate's, as he muttered: —

"There's a grain of hope in that cheer of your shipmates."

"Yes, Mr. Lawrence; the danger will soon be past."

"Pray God to keep us yet in his charge, young man; for you certainly have the ear of the Lord!" and glad tears streamed down his venerable face.

Raymond kneeled to slacken the rope across Nellie's chest, and said a word of cheer to the patient girl. She seized his hand and sought to reply; but her quivering lips and grateful looks were the only response she could make. But there was a wealth of language in her dark eyes, that repaid him a thousand-fold for the peril he had undergone for their sakes. An outcry from John brought the mate to his feet.

So far, they had ridden slowly out over ten inferior breakers without shipping a sea; until all began to depreciate the danger which they had looked for. John's experienced eye had detected the first humping-up of three monstrous rollers. Beginning farther out on the verge of the shoal than the rest, even beyond the anchored boat, there the surf heaped up into furious crests, frothing, and threatening destruction to the poor little raft, for the foam was breaking twenty feet above its occupants.

Raymond stooped quickly and drew the sail a few feet over the heads of his sacred charge, and bade them *hold in their breath* when the surf struck. Then a brief word to the Kanaka: "Drop flat on the raft when it strikes, John, and hold hard for your life, boy." And he followed his own instructions.

There was just time for a word of prayer while the raft lifted on the forefoot of the first gigantic roller, when down came ten feet depth of hissing, spuming foam, rolling over the bowed heads of the crouching men, and crashing down against those under the sail. Three successive times the rollers hid the raft wholly from view. The king breakers of St. Paul had done their worst, and passed harmlessly away, leaving the four occupants of the stanch raft alive and safe.

Again a cry of delirious joy burst forth from the ship's crew at the signal deliverance of their loved young mate and his rescued ones. When the last breaker swept over them, Raymond sprang up, drenched to the skin, and half stunned by the blows on his head. Flinging off the wet sail from the ghastly faces of Mr. Lawrence and his daughter, Raymond bade John unlash the one, while he knelt tenderly over the other to unloose the ropes which bound her to the raft, and bid them cheer, for further danger from breakers and other proximity to death was passed.

While John helped the half-moribund man to sit up, Raymond took the sick girl in his arms, and bade her look about upon liberty and life once more. Pointing with pride to the beautiful ship to which they were going, and to the men in the boat whose strong arms were bowsing

them out of death by starvation, he begged her to listen to the heart-felt cheering for their safety, and believe that all danger was passed.

Thus artfully did Raymond succeed in snatching the dazed girl from her alarming condition of mental *stasis*, and brought back a normal beat to her almost pulseless heart once more. So great had been their terror at being buried beneath the avalanche of waters, that they were both near dying with fright, when the rescue was completed. The re-action came quickly in the girl. The vacant look went out of her eyes, and the ashy pallor abated about her mouth, and both were soon able to comprehend that the hungry maw of the breakers could reach them no more.

Tears, grateful tears, ran down the cheeks of the redeemed ones, while their lips quivered in voiceless prayers, as they both seized a hand of their deliverer. Their faces beamed with love and gratitude for the brave, strong soul who had thus entered into the valley of death to save them.

In the midst of this scene, the raft was hauled alongside the waist-boat, when the boisterous crew stopped their cheering, hushed with awe at the affecting scene they beheld. Braybrook, Morey, old Tom, and Ben were alike in tears as they saw the reverence and love expressed by the wrecked ones for their deliverer, and heard the tremulous voice of the white-haired old man calling upon Heaven to bless them for their part in the rescue. Uncle Joe stood with clasped hands in his boat, praying aloud to the Giver of all good for his beneficent guidance in all which had transpired. It was an affecting scene, never to be forgotten by those who witnessed it.

At a signal from the mate, Mr. Bailey pulled up on the opposite side of the raft, ready to take the wrecked ones on board. Lifting Miss Lawrence tenderly in his arms, Raymond stepped into the bow-boat, and seated himself on the after thwart. John did the same by the old gentleman, for both of the rescued ones were too weak to help themselves in the least. They could not even sit up in the tottling boat, so terrified had they been by the recent crash of breakers, and so prostrating was their overflow of joy and thanksgiving for safety.

There they sat for twenty minutes watching the approaching ship, while she tacked round and ran down toward them, and hauled aback. While Braybrook was preparing to take the raft to the ship, Uncle Joe shot his boat alongside, in the waist-boat's place, as most convenient for hoisting up his passengers. Every man in the ship sprang to the tackle-falls, running the boat up to her cranes with song and chorus. There stood Captain Talbert and the ladies, anxiously awaiting the unfortunates, and eager to render some assistance to the sick girl.

Miss Lawrence had fainted, from excessive emotion, while the boat was being hoisted; and, thinking she was dying, the ladies sorrowed over the pale girl as over a dear friend. Raymond stepped out with the limp form in his arms, carried her into the lower cabin, and laid her in the berth near Miss Allston's. He showed no haste in resuscitating the girl, but at once began, in his province of physician, to dress the painful burns with a soothing embrocation, glad to have her remain in a syncopic condition while her wounds were being bandaged, so long as the systole of the heart continued. Having administered

the indicated remedy to prevent nerve-shock, he left the still faint girl in the tender care of the ladies, to be dressed in some more suitable underwear of their own.

Raymond had ordered Mr. Lawrence put into his berth. There he found the old gentleman lying weak as an infant, so anxious about the precarious condition of his daughter that he could not rest. When re-assured about her, and given to understand that his own recovery would do more than anything else toward the convalescence of Miss Nellie, he remained passive and restful, sleeping most of the day.

Having set the steward to making some thoroughly cooked gruel of Indian meal for the patients, Raymond got out of his wet clothes, and then permitted himself to devour a hearty meal, with the hopeful endeavor of making up for the starvation rations of the past day. The ship had taken aboard the raft, weighed the kedge anchor which had done such good service, and had been kept away on her course, close-hauled to the south, the trade wind having steadied into a mild, warm breeze.

Miss Allston came up before the mate had finished eating, to say that the girl had dropped into a quiet sleep, without coming out of her faint, and that the heart had regained a fairly normal beat, and a wee bit of color had come into her cheeks. She was told to let her sleep to her own time of waking, as the pain from her burns would throw her into high fever when she woke.

John Kanaka had been entertaining the people amidships with his adventures during the night aboard the wreck. And now Braybrook and Bailey joined the cap-

tain and ladies in the main cabin, eager to hear Raymond relate his experience on the wreck, and learn the incidents of the vessel's running ashore, as well as the history of the two rescued ones.

The ladies cried bitterly over the piteous state in which the girl was found, and declared that she was a brave, noble girl to resist such terrors, and keep such unselfish oversight over her aged father. They one and all expressed well grounded fears that Mr. Lawrence would never rally from the mental shock he had received. When re-assured on that point, the captain was asked where he should land the new passengers.

In reply, he said that he would give Mr. Lawrence his choice of landing at Pernambuco or Rio, adding that he wished to send home a mail from one or the other of these ports, to have the last lot of oil insured, and to increase the insurance on the ship, in fear she might be wrecked, as it is a peculiar idiosyncrasy of shipmasters to take aboard a shipload of needless anxiety for a while after seeing the wreck of another vessel.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE DIPLOMACY OF LOVE.

A SHRIEK coming from the lower cabin soon broke up the pleasant reunion above-stairs. Raymond sprang up and went down to Miss Lawrence, who had waked in less fever, but demented by her pains and the anæmic condition of her brain. She was now screaming for help, not for herself, but for some one to save her poor old father from being burned to death on the wreck.

The ladies followed quickly down, and endeavored by soothing words and gentle strokes on her forehead to reassure the startled girl. Raymond scanned the patient anxiously a moment, and then sought to administer some remedy by which to permanently alleviate the dementia, and also her numerous other bad symptoms. It is a nice point in therapeutics to determine just what to give in such a sudden metastasis of disease, but the physician who is master of his *Materia Medica* is not long left in doubt at the bedside, whatever the nature of the case.

Aconite had seemed to Raymond the only internal remedy required to subdue the high fever and great fear, together with the restlessness and unquenchable thirst. But other important indications had supervened during sleep. The febrile condition had changed. The apprehension was now more for another than for herself, the girl

still having a lingering dread of being left alone. While the thirst was now only for small, frequent drinks, — a swallow at a time, — her previous ghastly pallor had given place to a cold, damp, bluish skin, accompanied by great sinking of the vital forces, — most alarming symptoms, which demanded immediate relief.

There is but one unmistakable remedy for such a case of blood-poisoning as this. Arsenicum, given in small doses of the thirtieth potency, not only covers all the above symptoms, but is also the internal remedy in such excessive burns, to prevent undue suppuration from a large raw surface.

This specific was administered in grain doses, once an hour. Soon after each dose of medicine, a dessertspoonful of meal gruel was given, seasoned with cayenne, which is the best of all stimulants in either congestive or blue chills. An improvement soon took place, in color, pulse, and temperature, while the pinched, sunken, deathly look of the face passed away, and in less than two hours the patient was again sleeping a natural sleep.

Mr. Lawrence had heard the wild shrieks of his daughter, and demanded of the steward to be taken down to his sick child. After Raymond had selected and given his remedy, he heard a groan and piteous outcry behind. He turned and saw Mr. Lawrence sitting on the transom-locker, supported by the steward, horrified at the death-like appearance of his daughter.

"Where's the doctor?" the old man asked, in a weak, hoarse whisper, addressing his appalled looks and feeble words to the mate.

"I am the best substitute we have for one here, sir,

American whale ships do not carry physicians. But I think I can save your child."

"No, no! My poor Nellie is lost to me forever."

"Pray God, Mr. Lawrence, that my efforts may be successful."

"Poor deluded youth! How can *you* expect to save my child? She is lying at the point of death, and you do not know it. One so young can have neither knowledge nor experience. Father in heaven! have mercy on my tottering years, and spare my child."

The old gentleman fainted, and fell into the arms of the steward, whom the mate ordered to carry his charge back to his berth and not allow him to come below again.

Late in the afternoon Miss Lawrence woke refreshed and clear-headed. After taking a cup of the meal gruel to fortify her stomach against nausea, her burns were carefully dressed for the night. Miss Allston and Mrs. Talbert took turns in watching over her, while Raymond was called out every three hours to inspect the condition of his patient. She passed the night comfortably, sleeping most of the time. Her medicine was in such minute doses that it could be dissolved on the tongue without waking her.

The morning found the sick girl mending steadily. At the end of three days she was convalescing rapidly. On the fourth day she was taken on deck and laid in a cot, slung beneath the awning, where she enjoyed the cool breeze, and thrived on the balmy tropic air.

Mr. Lawrence daily gained strength, as he sat in his easy-chair and watched the marvellous recovery of his daughter. When alone by himself he brooded over the

sad events of the wreck. And were it not for the interest he took in watching the hopeful progress of his child, the old man would hardly have survived the mental shock which he had received. When he saw how dependent his child was upon Raymond's attendance, and that she now owed her life to him a second time, the doting parent came to love the young officer with an enduring attachment.

Miss Lawrence and Miss Allston were not long finding out that they were distantly related, through Washington Allston, who was a cousin of their mothers. This revelation proved a pleasant adjuvant for the invalid, and henceforth the two girls were inseparable companions. Asenith had previously shown herself a little ungenerous, because of Nellie's taking up Raymond's attention so exclusively, to the neglect of all others.

Though Miss Allston could not secure one of those delightful evening chats alone with the mate, as of old, she could at least be so fond of Nellie Lawrence as to prevent her having one of the delicious communal talks and walks with Raymond in the starlight, without the presence of a third party.

Between the two girls, they contrived to occupy most of the mate's time after the usual evening games in the cabin, when the trio — with or without Mrs. Talbert — would linger long hours about the taffrail, or in one of the quarter-boats. There they would sit, wing-and-wing, a sturdy young oak dove-tailed between two rare blossoms, as different in color and texture as the lily and the rose; yet both sweet and companionable girls.

During these rare evenings, while the ship ran down

through the balmy trades, these chatty girls would press their companion to teach them about the stars, as some of the most noted of the southern constellations and nebulæ were then coming into view. Orion hung directly above them, in some of their late talks. He is an equatorial constellation, and would pass the meridian on the 23d of January, the coming month, and now shone in his greatest splendor, near neighbor to other most interesting groups in the heavens.

The southeast trades came light and unsteady at first. Not unusual when so near their northern extremity, where they taper down next door to nothing. The sea had again become blue and transparent as glass. The miniature waves made one laugh to see them swell and strut, trying to ape the pomp and swagger of their larger fellows; they plumed up into tiny fringes of foam, with a deal more splutter and swirl than was becoming.

But for the strong westerly current, which is usual to the place, the ship should have made her course sailing free. Instead of that, she was braced up sharp until the lower yards breasted in the lee swifters; while the topsail yards were so near fore-and-aft as to give their lee rigging a skew three points awry. But with the yards thus braced, and the bowlines taut as fiddle-strings, the ship could sail a point and a half to weather of her course, and would thus make up for the leeward sag of the current.

From St. Paul to Pernambuco it is a south-southwest course. This would take a ship to the east of Fernando Noronha. But as the westerly current splits at Cape St. Roque, a part running south, along the coast, past Cape Frio, a vessel need not mind the leeward sag near the

Equator, even if she is currented west to the Roccas Shoals; for if she can but weather St. Roque, the current will then be in her favor.

Although he knew this fact, from the experience of others, yet Captain Talbert was unwilling to let the ship sag so far west as the Roccas; yet there the much dreaded current began to abate, and in latitude 5° south, it fairly curved southward, greatly accelerating the speed of the ship, and she passed St. Roque, Lat. 5° 28′, with a leading current and a free wind.

The trades freshened after passing the cape, and the upper yards were rounded well in; while the lower yards were checked in a trifle, not to strain the trusses; and were then well supported by strong preventer braces.

This new trim quickened the ship's paces amazingly. In an instant the antic jade was flinging up a jet of blue brine from her cutwater tasselled with foam; wetting the clew of her foretopsail with spoondrift, and carrying a rousing white bone in her teeth. The log-line scored sixteen and a half knots, much to the delight of the Lawrences, who had never seen the beautiful creature in one of her frisky moods. Another such day's sailing would take the ship to Pernambuco, where Mr. Lawrence had decided to debark.

It became known throughout the ship that Mr. Lawrence and Nellie had frequently urged Captain Talbert to give up his mate and let him go home with them, promising that Raymond should have all of this world's goods that he could desire. As the father did not succeed, his daughter had latterly taken up the matter, pleading with the soft-hearted captain as only a beautiful girl could do

when intent upon bestowing a suitable recompense upon her preserver.

Perhaps it might be deemed a little unkind in the captain, and certainly purely selfish in Miss Allston, to intimate — for want of better argument — that Raymond's heart was already irrevocably bound up in another girl, and that he could not possibly be induced to go to Boston to live. Yet both the captain and Miss Allston came to bitterly repent of their audacious insinuation to this high-bred girl, when she retorted: —

"Only a shallow, selfish heart could blame her father or herself for proffering the highest guerdon within their power — their love and their lives — to the only man in a ship's company willing to peril life to snatch them from a dreadful death."

The tears and sobs of the beautiful girl on this occasion were not needed to enforce her bitter retort. But they availed greatly with the captain, who at once gave up the battle, and surrendered, foot, horse, and dragoon. And it was understood from that hour that if Raymond chose to ask the captain for his discharge, he could have it.

But all their precious arguments did not deter Miss Lawrence from occupying every moment of Raymond's time and attention she could find plausible excuse for doing, in her capacity of a patient who did not wish to recover too fast. This charming, well bred girl was not above the feminine wiles of her sex in such a desperate gage of battle. She became an adept at noting pulse-beats, the proper cardiac rhythm, and the dangerous aspect of a very red tongue — red lips not being included. And when the pretty invalid could honestly detect some

sluggish action, accelerated beat, or awry look of her prattling lingual member, she instantly made use of the latter to call the steward, and send him for her honored physician and loved preserver.

It was immaterial who were in presence, or what the social surroundings might be, when Raymond came, at her call. Pretty Nellie Lawrence would hold out her dainty little hand for an examination of her radial pulse, unabashed at the insufficient pretext which had excited her fears. Or if the call was to be made more urgent, she declared that something serious must be the matter with her heart, and demanded auscultation of that important member, both posteriorly and anteriorly, together with careful digital touch, to feel how the poor heart jumped, as if it would leap from her bosom; as if the whole present company could not have easily diagnosed the girl's heart-disease through her soft, dark eyes, which were ever fastened upon Raymond's face with unstinted admiration.

It would be far too much to assume that the young mate was wholly indifferent to the deep-seated admiration of this debonair girl; for Charles Raymond was very human, and Miss Lawrence was elegant in her manners, and of transcendent beauty. Whether he would or no, the one day of peril which they had undergone together had linked this girl to his life forever.

A man does not willingly risk life for a woman without subsequently placing her upon a higher niche than he allots to most others; and Raymond's success in snatching Nellie from a second death, in his capacity of physician, served to intensify this bond. He could not but look upon this girl with a sober, brotherly affection, until there had

sprung up a beautiful confidence between them, born of the occasion; something more enduring than lay between him and any other woman.

Raymond intuitively knew that he had rightfully earned this girl's confidence, as no man else could ever secure it by years of kindly conventional acts of life. The man felt himself entitled to the highest diploma of trust which a woman can bestow. Feeling this, and knowing the purity of motive which induced him to save her, with a man's egotism he accepted her gratitude and affection as his due, and would give her the best he could in return.

Late in the afternoon, as the ship approached Pernambuco, Mr. Lawrence asked Raymond into his state-room for an interview, and at once made the proposition that he should leave the ship and go home with him, saying: —

"Mr. Raymond, we are fast nearing port. Nellie and I leave the ship to-morrow, and I wish to make you the formal offer to go home with us, that I may adopt you as my son. Nellie is my only remaining child; and but for you, I should now be childless.

"Wait, my dear young friend, and hear me out," as the mate made an attempt to answer. "Captain Talbert has consented to your discharge, if you ask for it; though the good old man loves you dearly. He tells me that you are wedded to sea-life. If so, I have several ships of a thousand tons or more, any of which you shall command, if you wish. But I had rather you would stay ashore with us, and take charge of my part of the mercantile business of Lawrence Brothers, for which purpose I will furnish you all the necessary means. Let me hope that you will accept this offer as frankly as I have made it."

Raymond was not made of the material to stoically receive or reject such a test of love and gratitude as this. Tears sprang to his eyes when he saw how much Mr. Lawrence had set his heart on this generous scheme, and he replied with a broken voice: —

"Really, Mr. Lawrence, I am sorry you have put me into a position like this. It pains me to have to refuse any request of yours. But I could not think of accepting such generous compensation for any service of mine."

"Don't say that, my young friend. My daughter and I owe our lives to your admirable courage and skill; and you must not assume that any recompense in my power to give can requite the obligation you have put us under. Believe me, my son, my mature judgment must be better than yours in this matter."

"Perhaps so, dear sir; but then a sailor must sail by his own chart and compass in this life. This is the third time that I have been compelled to differ from you in vital matters, sir; and as my reasoning proved good in our two previous differences, I must still abide by my own conscience in this case."

"Pray, young man, in what have we ever differed before?"

"It ought not to be necessary for me to recall the time when Mr. Lawrence wished me to leave him on the wreck to die in peace, rather than hasten his death by drowning in the surf. And after we came aboard, you assumed that your daughter was already in the hands of death, and declared that I could not possibly have the knowledge and experience to combat such a case. In both cases, your maturer judgment was in the wrong."

"Ah, yes, ah, yes. God be praised! But then one could not look to find such ingenuity in the first case; nor expect such a fund of medical lore in one so young, and a sailor at that. This is another matter, and I must be right. Perhaps I ought to tell you that Nellie joins me heart and soul in this offer, in which you will become my son and her brother."

"Oh, Mr. Lawrence, you dear old man, don't make this task any more difficult for me to decide. Believe me, dear sir, I shall always love and venerate you, and hold your precious Nellie in the highest esteem as long as I live."

"Don't deny me, Raymond dear; Nellie and I have put more heart into this matter than you conceive. Why should you, with your natural gifts, be toiling on the sea — especially in your most dangerous of all occupations — when we, your debtors, are eager to share with you our home, our hearts, and all our worldly goods. I cannot take your refusal, you most obstinate of men."

The old man caught Raymond in his arms, and the tears streamed over his wrinkled visage and down his long white beard. He felt heart-broken, in his senile grief, to think of separating from one who had rendered such vital aid to himself and his darling child. Raymond, too, was distressed to know how he could mollify the old man's sorrow.

"Look upon me as a son, if you wish, Mr. Lawrence, and I will endeavor to be worthy of your adoption and your love; and let me be a loving brother to Nellie, who is a noble, beautiful girl. But, believe me, I love the sea and the adventures of whaling which I have adopted, and I

mean to abide by it till I am master of this, the best ship in the service."

"But you have done so much for us, we want to keep you with us forever," exclaimed the old man through his tears.

"You have made too much of my poor services. I would gladly undertake the same thing to-morrow for a stranger, for it is my nature to doat on such perils. So let us say no more of this"; and he put the old man away from him, and tried to smile away his tears.

"Be it as you will, you noble, obstinate fellow. But it will break poor Nellie's heart, I fear."

"I will be to the dear girl all that an absent brother can be. And the voyage promises not to be long."

And the two left the state-room in response to the steward's call to supper. The ladies and Captain Talbert were already seated at table. Tears came to Miss Lawrence's eyes as she made room for her father at her side, for she knew by his sorrowful face and tearful eyes that his mission had not succeeded as they wished.

When evening shut down, the ship was running close along the Brazilian shore. A beautiful gleam from the lighthouse at Olinda lit up the faces of the cabin-group, as they sat aft around the taffrail, watching the light abroast of them, and intent upon waiting for the two island lights at Pernambuco to heave in sight.

Mr. Lawrence had taken occasion after supper to communicate his ill-success to his daughter, and their mutual disappointment at Raymond's refusal now threw a visible gloom over the party. Mrs. Talbert understood the cause, and the good-hearted lady did the best she could to

enliven the solemn scene. She urged upon Raymond to tell them something of the towns they were passing, and induced the captain to relate some of his many experiences at the port which they were about to enter.

Though Miss Lawrence had fully convalesced at the time, she was still favored with the seat of honor upon all such occasions as this. She chose the cushioned seat around the elliptic stern, so that she could recline, with her back to the round-house. Whether her purpose was obvious to others or not, she expressed just sufficient timidity about being pitched out by the roll of the ship, to induce Raymond to move his chair up close beside her, where she could rest her arm upon his shoulder.

When thus cosily seated about the taffrail, the group first listened to the mate's experience among the convents at Olinda, where the pretty Portuguese nuns make rare feather flowers, and are sufficiently worldly-minded to know that a callow young sailor will pay twice as much for their feather-work as his elders, as Raymond subsequently learned on shipboard. The captain followed with many amusing incidents which had happened to him, both at Olinda and Recife.

During these recitals, the frequent sighs of Miss Lawrence were possibly noticed by no one but Raymond, as the two sat there in the starlight, snuggled closely together. When, at length, the girl's burden of regrets became unendurable, she leaned yet more closely upon her companion, and spoke in low tones upon the sad topic lying nearest to her heart : —

" Father tells me that you have refused to leave the sea and go home with us, Mr. Raymond," spoken in a

low, sweet cadence made pathetic by the proximity of tears.

"Yes, I could not do otherwise. You have both made too much of my poor services."

"How can you say that, Mr. Raymond? Is there anything of more value than one's life? And have you not given a father and daughter a renewed lease of their lives?"

"But, Miss Lawrence, your father seeks to put me under too great obligation. Don't you see, dear girl, that, feeling as I do about this matter, I could not endure it?"

"Perhaps you are right. But you have promised pa that you will become his adopted son, and accept his poor little Nellie as your loving sister. For this much let me thank you with all my heart."

"Yes, dear, if this much is acceptable to you both, I shall feel myself honored by your esteem."

"Oh, Raymond, how can you doubt it? We both feel that all we possess is inadequate to repay your one noble act. Your refusal to go home with us has made me feel very sad. My heart beats terribly; I fear it is a valvular trouble, or perhaps enlargement; what do you think?"

"It is simply neurotic."

"There! That was a sharp clutching feeling, like the grip of an iron hand. What is your remedy for such a disorder?"

"Cactus Grandiflorus covers that symptom beautifully, and will relieve you in a moment. Let me go and get you some."

"No, indeed. We are seated so comfortably that I can't spare you. And then it would be a little rude to

leave while Captain Talbert is talking. Just see, please, if my pulse isn't acting awfully," and she laid her opposite hand across her lap for his professional inspection.

"Yes, dear girl, it is a trifle excited; and your poor little heart thumps against my shoulder like the wings of an imprisoned bird." And Nellie leaned a trifle more closely to port, that her good doctor should have the most favorable opportunity to observe her cardiac trouble, saying, in her sweet, musical tones: —

"I'm sure, dear Raymond, that you can cure it, if you are attentive to me"; and her soft words were rounded off by a most convincing sigh, which left no doubt of the profound nature of her trouble.

"Certainly, it is curable. But you must strive to regain quiet, so as to insure a good night's rest against the time of your boat-journey ashore to-morrow." Raymond sought to withdraw his hand from the girl's pulse, but Nellie caught it in her own tiny palm, and held it fast, saying: —

"No. I want your hand, my brother. If we are to be loving brother and sister, as you have solemnly promised we may, then I shall assert my sisterly privilege from this moment. May I not, dear Raymond?" And she cooed his loved name in a low warble into his ear.

"That shall be as you wish, Miss ——" said the half alarmed sailor. But the sprightly girl clapped her disengaged hand over the mate's mouth in a twinkling, saying, in her sweet, prompt way: —

"Oh, please don't ever 'Miss' me again. If I am to be your truly sister, I want to be your little sister Nellie, and never, never, Miss Anybody else."

Raymond laughed quietly at the girl's swift sisterly advances, which slightly overawed the modest fellow. But he responded by saying that it should be just as she wished.

"Of course it should be as I wish. And now, my precious brother, promise to write us from every port, pa and me. Though it would be much nicer if you will always write me a letter all for myself. You must begin, 'My own dear Sister Nellie,' and always end with something sweet, for I shall never let a soul see it. And you mustn't forget to tell us just where to send our letters." The girl hummed a lively air, showing that the heart-disease was steadily improving under the magnetic proximity of her new brother.

"Yes, dear Nellie, I shall be glad to write to you both, relating everything about our voyage. Our next port will probably be Valparaiso. But no letters should be sent there after January, as we should be more likely to receive them if sent to Honolulu."

"Won't it be a long time to wait before we hear from you?" The newly made sister stroked and fondled her brother's hand with her dainty little fingers, taking a deal of comfort out of the easy, confidential way that she had assumed, as a right which she meant to maintain.

"Not very long, dear. You will hear from me in a month or two after your return."

It was getting late, and still the captain talked on. The wind had dropped light, and the lighthouses at Recife had not yet appeared. The company were getting a little impatient. Miss Allston left her seat by Mr. Lawrence, and came and sat at Nellie's feet. She had kept aloof

from her room-mate as long as she could, and Miss Lawrence now showed her appreciation of it by making room for Asenith; but was not quite willing to give up Raymond's hand, when her girl companion sought for a small digit to fondle.

Raymond now discovered that proximity to land had induced quite a dew-fall. He started up at once, and insisted that both father and daughter should go in out of the evening damp. As the ladies all rose to enter the cabin, the forward lookout called out, "Light ho!" It proved to be the long-looked-for light of Recife, and the party tarried a moment to determine if it was the fixed or revolving light that was seen.

Nellie waited to receive her dose of cactus, though the symptom that had called for it was gone; cured by a greater alchemic than drugs. Yet it was a laudable excuse to repeat her pleasant good-night, while she peered roguishly into the eyes of her medical friend and brother. Greeting the others with a pleasant message to each, she retired with Miss Allston to her berth below.

It was Braybrook's watch out. As the captain expressed some anxiety owing to the ship's being near in to the land, Raymond offered to stay up if the captain would go to bed. This was satisfactory, and the two officers walked the quarter-deck, chatting pleasantly. Occasionally they would extend their beat into the waist, to verify the leadsman's soundings, and take new bearings of the two lights on the Island which forms the harbor of Recife.

At one o'clock all hands were called. The ship completed her bearings by the Olinda light and the Recife light-tower; then sails were clewed up, the anchor let go,

and the ship rode almost motionless in the open roadstead of Pernambuco. Not till the sails were all furled, and everything made snug about deck, did Raymond seek his cot, which the steward had slung for him three hours before in the main cabin.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE PARTING AT PERNAMBUCO.

AT early morning the health officer and the custom-house officials came off to the ship. The first dignitary was induced to leave a "clean bill of health," by which the captain would be permitted to land. The custom officer scrutinized the ship's manifest with a view to learn what things there were on board which might possibly be smuggled ashore. These watch-dogs of the Portuguese revenue are a nondescript set, who are not willing that any one shall cheat their government but themselves.

The guard-boats, in the harbor, and the custom officers, at the wharf, are equally watchful that you do not smuggle off your honest purchases *from* the shore without paying an enormous export-tax, be it only a bunch of feather flowers, or a monkey. Thus, all should be warned not to stow contraband things under the stern when passing the guard-boat, as such an innocent undertaking often costs more than the value of the things you try to run through.

But if sin of this nature lurks in you big as a meeting-house, here are an adept old smuggler's directions: "Try to look sort of meek-like, and honest as skim-milk, a few times while passing the guard-boat. Go square up alongside of their boat each time you pass it, and be rather insistent that the officer shall see you display all the

coats and wraps under the bow and stern cuddies, and give the chief imp a good cigar in pay for a light every time you stop. Very soon they one and all come to recognize you as a person of such remarkable integrity that butter wouldn't melt in your mouth, and smuggled goods would lie heavy on your conscience. Such honesty reflects seriously upon a guardsman, and ever after your boat is waved away as you approach, and bid to 'Pass on!' Now then, mister, the next passage you make past that guard-boat, 'Go in lemons, if you come out squeezed!' and make a haul that will do to tell of for all after years."

It had been agreed upon by the captain and Mr. Lawrence that the cabin party should go to a hotel for two days, during which time the ship could take aboard her water and fresh provisions for the Cape Horn passage. After breakfast two of the ship's boats were got ready to take the shore party into the harbor. A seat for three was placed in the stern, cushioned with gay-colored flags, and made comfortable for the two miles' pull to the landing.

Captain Talbert took his wife, Miss Allston, and the little girl in his boat. The mate carried Mr. Lawrence and Miss Nellie in the larboard boat; and as Raymond would remain ashore with his party, Hoogley steered the boat; so that Nellie had the pleasure of sitting between her father and brother during the long pull. The two boats sped gayly along over the green water, aided by a free wind and a flowing sea; and in about half an hour they rounded the rocky point of San Antonio, the island where stands the Tower of Recife.

The delay at the guard-boat was brief. The long,

narrow harbor was well occupied with foreign shipping, busily loading and discharging cargoes; through these and the passing lighters the ship's boats picked their way to the wharf, where fairly good steps were found for landing. The party walked to the hotel, which fronted the quay, and was not far from the wharf. By some process of natural affinity, Miss Nellie fastened to Raymond's arm, and, with the art of a courtier, invited her father to escort Miss Allston; and in this order they followed after the captain, wife, and child.

Soon as they were all snugly established at the hotel, with rooms allotted to each, Mr. Lawrence at once took it upon himself to entertain the ship's party as his guests. An elaborate shore-breakfast was ordered at ten o'clock for a party of nine. The American Consul, and Don Manuel, the Portuguese consignee of the Boston house of Lawrence Brothers, had been invited to attend; a note of invitation and urgent business inducements had been sent to these foreign residents by the health officer.

Mr. Lawrence's visitors came promptly; in time for a general introduction all around, and a word of congratulation to be said and received about their sad wreck and singular escape, before the call came for breakfast. While eating, a brief story of the shipwreck was related by Mr. Lawrence, which took up the meal-time hour. Captain Talbert and the mate promised to narrate their part of the affair in the evening, as time pressed for business purposes.

After breakfast, the host detained Don Manuel on mercantile and legal business — a lawyer just then coming in. Captain Talbert and the consul went to the consulate to enter the ship and transact other ship affairs.

Raymond went to the harbor-master's to order out a water-boat to replenish the Fleetwing's casks; thence to the market, where he met the captain, and the two selected potatoes, fruits, fowls, pigs, and a plump bit of two-year-old live stock, to carry on the legs till they were ready to kill, down in the forties.

Dinner had been agreed upon at six. This left a long day for business and pastime. When the captain had helped along the marketing, he returned to the hotel; for he had promised to escort the ladies on a shopping cruise, where they could inspect monkeys, parrots, feather flowers, and all sorts of foreign bric-à-brac, such as feminine creatures adore — their admiration scaling up-along according to the extravagant price of the article.

Raymond was left to look up a lighter which would take aboard the purchases of all kinds early in the morning. After this he returned to the hotel, at about three o'clock in the afternoon. Nellie was watching his return from the corridor, and ran in to meet him at the head of the stairs. The young lady was in high glee at having her new brother all to herself; the other ladies being absent, and her father busy with his consignee and lawyer.

"Where's your father, Miss Nellie?"

"He's with the foreigners. They are making papers which you must promise to sign." And she looked archly at the mate for reply.

"Oh, yes, if it will please my new friends."

"Then I shall feel sure that you are pa's dear son and somebody's own precious brother."

The girl's eyes were sparkling with affectionate merriment, while her flute-like tones seemed caught from the

leashed mocking-bird singing from his perch on the corridor. She seated Raymond at an open window, and occupied an ottoman at his feet; there she sat holding his hand between her dimpled fingers, a variety of emotions flitting over her face as she peered fondly into his eyes and asked countless questions. The graceful creature seemed intent upon garnering as much of Raymond's presence as she could during the absence of the party. A tiny shadow followed this happy mood, with a sigh so profound as to attract her companion.

"Why, Nellie, what are you thinking of, to look so solemn and sad, and sigh such a nor'west breeze as that?" Seeking to expel every morbid thought from the girl's mind.

"Oh, Raymond, you grow dearer and dearer to me every minute. And the dreadful thought that you will insist upon going to sea keeps intruding upon me, when it would be so much better for all if you would go home with us."

"But that's tabu talk, you know, Nellie. You are much too brave and sensible to give way to such feelings, my little sister," and he looked a trifle sober, to impress what he said.

"Do you really think I am brave, Raymond?"

"The bravest girl that I ever knew. Few could have borne up as you did on the wreck. It is a picture of heroism which I love to contemplate."

And Raymond stroked one of the dainty little hands which lay in his, in a reverie, as his mind wandered back to the wreck. The girl's eyes dimmed with pleasurable tears as she listened to his unstinted praise — more than

his guarded tongue had ever uttered before. She pressed her lips to his hand, and murmured a low blessing upon his head, as with quivering lips she renewed her query.

"And sensible, too, my precious brother?" and her heart was in her mouth as she awaited his reply.

"Why, certainly you are, you pretty little Ninny! What makes you ask?"

"Ah, dear Raymond, I was truly afraid you might think me silly and foolish; and not quite worth having as a sister." And the little minx puckered up her lips and looked demure as she continued: "And am I a pretty Ninny, too?"

"Did I say that?"

"Yes, you *did*, and I don't see how you can go back on it."

"Let it stand, then, imperishable as fate!" and the two sat smiling at each other. However, the topic was too pleasant to be dropped.

"Come, dear brother, tell me some more sterling qualities that I possess," and the look was earnest, deep-freighted with a wish to know in what category Raymond placed her.

"Well, then, my little sister, I'll tell you truly: I think you are a nice girl in so many ways that, honestly, Nellie, I'm not a bit sorry that I saved you."

This raillery brought the little witch promptly back to her merry mood again. In the midst of her peals of laughter, the ladies came in upon them, glad to find the moping girl in better spirits than when they left her.

Mr. Lawrence and his associates soon came out. Don Manuel and the legal gentleman left, to return again in

the evening. As the dinner-hour drew near, the ladies went to their rooms to prepare. The gong soon sounded, and the evening meal was a source of great pleasure to them all. Mr. Lawrence related that, beside having the indenture made to take Raymond into his family, he had taken the occasion to transact considerable mercantile business, as the English steamer was expected in a few days, upon which they should embark, in fear of having to wait too long for some direct passage home.

By preconcerted appointment, the consul and Don Manuel came in during the evening. Captain Talbert and Raymond were asked into the private room, where Mr. Lawrence announced the business. He declared his wish to adopt the mate of the Fleetwing, under the style of Charles Raymond Lawrence, with the understanding that the name Lawrence was left optional, to be used or not, during the present voyage. But it was part of the indenture that the full name should be permanently assumed when the mate returned home, before entering upon his newly acquired patrimony.

The consul was asked to read the document for the benefit of all present; the witnesses, as well as the signatory members of the duplicate indenture. When the reading was over, and a general approval expressed as to its construction, Mr. Lawrence and Raymond drew up to the table and signed the indentures, which were witnessed by the consul, the consignee, and Captain Talbert.

While Raymond was receiving congratulations for this deserved reward of his brave act, Mr. Lawrence asked the consignee if he had filled out the other papers required. Don Manuel replied by producing two sets of exchange,

each in three duplicates. The first was exchange for $25,000, drawn in favor of Charles R. Lawrence, payable at the Bank of North America, Boston, U. S. The second exchange, for $1000, was drawn in favor of John Kanaka, on the same bank. This last was delivered to Captain Talbert, to be disposed of by him as the boat-steerer wished.

It was with a just degree of pride that Charles Lawrence clasped the hand of his new father, and modestly accepted the generous sum given him as the first *honorarium* of the princely fortune that awaited him.

Taking his son's arm, Mr. Lawrence invited the gentlemen to pass into the drawing-room, where the pleased old merchant presented Charles as his legally adopted son.

The ladies sprang up to come forward and greet the young hero; but while two of them advanced and congratulated him with pride and pleasure in his success, Miss Lawrence dropped back into her chair, sobbing aloud with joy, while she hid her face in her hands, powerless to leave her seat. Having received the friendly greetings of Mrs. Talbert and Miss Allston, Raymond hastily crossed to where Nellie sat, and spoke as he approached her: —

"Has my little sister Nellie no pleasant word for her new brother — Charles Lawrence?" and he reached out and drew her hands gently from her tear-stained face. Smiling through her tears, Nellie sprang up and put her arms about his neck, sobbing louder than ever upon the bosom of this much-loved friend. The girl's joy nearly induced hysteria at this happy consummation of her wishes.

Gaining command of herself in a few minutes, Miss

Lawrence looked brightly up, dashed the tears from her eyes, brushed the dark ringlets from her face, and took Raymond's arm to go and thank her father for what he had done; also desiring to learn if the moneyed part of the business had been accomplished. This being found to her satisfaction, the two joined Captain Talbert and the ladies, leaving Mr. Lawrence to transact further business with the Recife gentlemen.

Putting on their wraps, the ladies expressed a wish to walk out on the corridor for a breath of evening air. In addition to the two lighthouses, the harbor was then prettily dotted with the blue, red, and white lights of the shipping and the guard-boats. The bands of two naval vessels were entertaining, each playing, by turns, the national airs of the other, the sad strains acquiring an added charm from the interval of water which rippled between them and the shore.

When the bands ceased playing, a fine tenor voice burst forth, pleading the beauty of his far-away love, in Spanish verse, preluded and accompanied by a guitar. This love-ditty was soon answered from a Portuguese vessel, by a girl's strong, clear contralto, sung in strains sufficiently correct and sweet to hush every other note within hearing. Several times these two rich, rare voices responded to each other, till every loving heart in the haven was attuned to the all-pervading sentiment which the singers had advocated so well.

Our party had clustered into a compact group to listen to the singing. As they sat leaning over the balustrade, with ears alert to catch every note of the songs, almost unknowingly Nellie nestled closer and closer to her pre-

cious brother, quite unconsciously stealing her little hand into his, sighing from the very depths of her being at the close of each song. So tumultuous was the girl's heart-beat against his side, that Raymond's strong, steady pulsation went a deal out of its usual course to beat in the same delicious rhythm as the lovable creature's by his side. So much were the hearts of the young people in unison, at that moment, that by some unaccountable concert of movement the cheeks of the two were found nestled lovingly together, purring verily like two kittens in a mew.

When the final pause of singing came, one by one the company aroused. And as Mr. Lawrence came out at that moment, Miss Allston sprang up and took his arm for a walk on the long length of the corridor, the poor girl being the only one who was not paired during that delicious trance of songs. The Talberts followed suit. And Raymond and Nellie could do no less than start up and follow in the wake of the others, though they were fast becoming steeped in blissful emotions, where locomotion soon comes to be a forgotten evolution.

After they had walked back and forth frequently, prattling volubly about the novelty of the sights and sounds about them, Miss Lawrence broke the momentary pause by an unexpected announcement, which brought all to a sudden halt.

"Now, stop, good friends, right here. I am just going to confess my sins of the day to all present. I do it in fear that I sha'n't sleep a wink to-night, if I don't free my wicked heart of its burden."

A half-suppressed titter rippled among the ladies,

more substantially chorused by a light laugh from Mr. Lawrence, and a subdued guffaw from the captain, at this honest announcement.

"It's truly no laughing-matter for me. Brother Raymond has been pointing out the lights of the dear old Fleetwing, far away yonder in the seaward background, where she lifts and lowers in the rise and fall of the swell, as if signalling to me, with her green and red fingers of flame, to abjure all naughty thoughts about her." She paused as if the enormity of her sin had deprived her of speech.

"Well, my child, we've got the text of your confession; now let us have the terrible context," said her father.

"Oh, pa, I have wished more than once to-day that something awful might happen to the Fleetwing, so that she could not carry any of these dear friends away from us. Then we would all go home together. But now that I have become so happy with this dear new brother at my side, I am horrified at my dreadful wishes, and have repeatedly asked to be forgiven for such unheard-of selfishness."

"Let your repentance be very thorough, my daughter, for it was indeed a wicked thought."

"Indeed, pa, it was. When I now look upon the lights of that beautiful ship, out on the dark sea, I realize that she is as dear to me as to any of you: and I would not have her destroyed for the world. Especially as these dear friends, and this precious brother, are to trust their lives in her."

"Yes, Nellie," replied her father, "it was through a most wonderful providence that God sent the Fleetwing to our rescue."

"That's about so, Mr. Lawrence," added the captain. "But for that confounded eastern back-drift which caught us in its grip, north of the Line, — something which never happened to me before, — the ship would have passed one hundred and twenty miles to the west of St. Paul, and you would have been left to starve. And we shall all remember that it was this impulsive young mate of mine who tried to burn up his little sister by a gun-wad."

Instantly two little arms were about somebody's neck, with a possible design of strangulation. And Raymond was in turn brought before the confessional by Nellie's question: —

"You didn't fire that wad on purpose, did you, dear?"

"Yes, I'm afraid I did, for I put it into the gun myself."

"But you didn't mean to burn up your little sister?"

"If I did, I repented, just as you have done. But that singular fire was the most providential part of the rescue."

"If you have no objection, Captain Talbert," said Mr. Lawrence, "I wish we might all meet in prayer a few minutes before we retire to-night. My heart is so full toward you all that I would like to express my feeling upon this our last night together. This is my daughter's suggestion, and it has my hearty approval."

"There is no reason why your wishes should not be adopted," replied Captain Talbert, who, though he never held services on shipboard as Small did, was often religiously inclined.

It was nearly twelve o'clock when they went into the drawing-room, from whence they assembled in the small private parlor for prayer. It was a devout group that knelt about the venerable old patriarch at that midnight

hour, while he poured forth his heartfelt gratitude to the Heavenly Father; calling down Heaven's blessings upon the beautiful ship, which by God's own guidance came to their rescue.

He prayed for her venerable captain, who had opened up his heart like a brother to receive them in their distress; for the dear wife and lady passenger, who had been as loving sisters unto her who was as the apple of his eye and the core of his heart; for which he must continue their debtor through his brief span of life.

He prayed with a full heart for all the officers and crew of that dear ship; men who gladly drew them out from the devouring breakers, and wept with joy at their rescue. Above all he pleaded with the Almighty for that one noble soul, — the bravest where all were brave, the noblest where all were heroes, — he who felt the Father's hand had appointed unto him the task of peril in that hour. But for whom, death by the slow torture of fire had been their lot. He prayed God to watch over that young life, as one too precious to be lost; even though he toyed with the dangers of his vocation, as a child with fire, dazzled by its brightness and its beauty.

It was an appeal which went home to the hearts of all. Most especially was it of value to Captain Talbert, — noble old sea-dog that he was, — for his sailor superstitions were as thoroughly aroused as Tom Crawford's or old Ben's. Arguing as those veterans continued to do: Had they not snatched two beings from grim Death's very grasp; and as Satan is believed by all honest tars to be ever leagued with Death, was it not probable that old Nick

would track the ship with ill-luck, if not dire disaster, to the end of the voyage?

Harboring such deep-grounded delusions in common with his veritable old shellbacks, there was wonderful efficacy in the pious outpourings of such a man as Mr. Lawrence. And it was the captain's earnest belief — though confessed with bated breath — that the devil had got a thundering setback, which might possibly last through the voyage. And the old man sailed away, on the following day, with a lighter heart than he came in with.

Before separating for the night, Mr. Lawrence shook hands, with kind wishes expressed to all. Nellie came round and kissed the captain, after parting with the ladies, reserving Raymond for the last. To him she gave a double share of good nights, saluting him on both cheeks, and then affectionately put up her small red lips for a sister's just recompense. Raymond complied with the pantomimic request of the witching girl, but with a deal more trepidation than he ever felt when tackling a fighting whale. Bewildered with her success, Nellie ran to her father, caught his arm, and hastened him away in the direction of their sleeping-rooms.

It had been determined that breakfast should be at nine, in consideration of the ladies wishing to do more shopping. Raymond was up at six, ordering his lighter round to the market-quay, ready for her load. Before nine, the vessel was on her way out by the Olinda passage, in time for the last run of the northern tide. The tides at Recife run north and south, with great force, inside of the island harbor.

When Raymond returned to the hotel, the whole party

were out on the corridor watching for him, and he received his sister's greeting manfully. Leading her back to the corridor, he pointed out his lighter, then rounding the Recife Tower on its way to the ship, as a result of his early rising. But what to make of a second lighter going out side by side with his, neither the captain nor the mate could understand; as the Fleetwing was the only ship then lying in the roadstead.

A call from the gong paired them off for breakfast, Nellie clinging fast to her brother. After a prolonged and pleasant meal, the two ladies laid their embargo on the captain's going out, requesting his escort while they finished their purchases. Nellie was urged to go with them, but declined with thanks. Though sadly in need of clothes, she preferred to continue in borrowed wear while Raymond was ashore. The two went out on the corridor to walk in the bland morning air, for though it was past ten o'clock, the trades had not yet struck in.

Captain Talbert agreed to go with the ladies if Raymond would go and settle the port-dues, consul's fees, and the provision-bills at the consignee's. He wished to be ready to leave when the boat came in, at four o'clock. Miss Lawrence entered a strong protest against this arrangement; she declared that her brother had accomplished a good day's work before breakfast, and should now be left with her father and herself to the last moment.

Mr. Lawrence now came to the rescue, saying that he had agreed with the several creditors to pay all dues against the ship. Captain Talbert demurred at this too generous act, and declared that he could not receive anything in the way of compensation for their brief stay on

shipboard; as a sailor never accepts remuneration from a wrecked shipmate, without mentioning the superstition connected with it.

"Yes, yes, captain," replied the old merchant, "this matter has been all talked over between us. No need to view this in the light of payment for any service of yours. It is a present to the ship; as the fruits, etc., in the small lighter are presents from Nellie and me to the officers and crew of the dear old Fleetwing."

"Oh ho! That's what the second lighter was up to, is it? Well, well, sir, you manage things a little too smart for a sailor-man to head you off." The captain caught up the glass and levelled it at the ship. "Yes, there're two lighters 'longside, true as Moses. Well, Mr. Lawrence, I tender many thanks in the name of the ship, captain and crew. I suppose my lost son will do the proper thing for the officers."

Captain Talbert prepared to leave with the ladies, first exchanging roguish glances with Miss Lawrence, who stood holding fast to the mate in fear he might be smuggled away. Putting his head back through the door, he said his last word: —

"Tell ye what, little Miss Nellie, I'm going to take a last look at my Charlie 'fore I go. For I've known sailor-men to desert ship on much less incentive than my boy is having from two bright eyes that I know of."

Amidst the jolly laughter which followed this pleasant banter, Miss Lawrence hailed down from the corridor as the captain appeared on the street, "What reward would you offer for such a deserter, captain?"

The gallant old man turned, and took off his hat as he

replied to the flushed young girl: "The whole ship and cargo, pretty miss. So don't you think to steal away my mainstay and rudder, till the voyage is over."

"Oh, sir, that reward wouldn't bring him back. So you had best look your last upon him now." The captain laughed, bowed, and followed swaggering along in the wake of the ladies, who had gone ahead.

Mr. Lawrence lay reclining in a lolling-chair, enjoying his freshly imported Havana, and taking part in the talk of the young people as they passed him while walking forth and back along the corridor. While watching the busy scenes among the shipping, the two lighters were seen entering the harbor, coming quickly down before the strong southern tide. In an hour after, Don Manuel made his appearance, bringing Braybrook's receipt for two lighter-loads, giving products in detail, for which the consignee brought his bill against the ship. This Mr. Lawrence acknowledged on account, and then asked the agent to go and settle the custom dues and the consul's fees, which he was also to carry to account.

Three o'clock was the hour agreed upon for dinner. The young folks had hours of close, confiding talk, in which Nellie asked Raymond to tell her the honest state of his feelings for Mary Tudor — whatever that might be. And she as honestly told him the captain and Mrs. Talbert's belief that Mamie would not be permitted to wait his return. She begged him to fortify himself against such broken troth, and to remember that there were others who would value him above all price, as the best and noblest on earth, fortifying her last conviction by the aid of two little arms about his neck, with other nameless endearments,

while sorrowing over the presupposed treachery of another girl.

The ladies came back in good time for dinner, and a bright, pleasant hour was passed over the meal. Promptly at four, the porter announced Hoogley with a boat for the captain. This broke up the delightful table-chat at once. The trades were becoming fresh, and the sea running large, so that the boat would have a hard pull against the short chop, and no time must be lost.

Nellie's beaming face blanched in an instant at this sudden call for parting. Tears sprang into her soft eyes, and her lips quivered with suppressed emotion. After a warm greeting and loving words all around, Mr. Lawrence went down to the street with the departing friends, leaving Nellie a moment's privacy with her brother.

That the parting was pathetic and sad between the two, could only be judged by the mate's tears and unusual agitation when he followed down after the party, for Nellie's grief was too uncontrollable for her to appear on the corridor, as all had expected she would. With a warm embrace and loving words, good old Mr. Lawrence parted with his newly adopted son, as if he was his first-born, and best loved. And it was a sad scene for all who witnessed the separation.

The captain and wife, Raymond and Miss Allston paired off and walked briskly to the wharf, with the child running ahead with a tiny King Charles that Miss Lawrence had given her. The boat was soon headed out with the northern tide, which had changed in good time to favor the passage to the ship. Mr. Lawrence waved his hat to them as they passed, but Nellie, poor girl, was

seen by them no more. The girl's experience during the last month had comprised the romance of a lifetime.

As the boat neared the ship, Captain Talbert waved his hat for Braybrook to get the ship under-weigh, as it was becoming more and more diffcult to take the anchor against the increasing wind. Mr. Bailey was aft with a gang ready to hoist up the boat, with the ladies and child sitting in it.

Raymond went forward to his duty on the bow, greeting all hands kindly as he passed, and shaking hands with Braybrook with great cordiality; for the two men had long since become the best of friends. In a half-hour's time the anchor was hove up, sail made, and the Fleetwing heading south for Abrolhos Banks, their next sperm-whale ground.

When tacks, sheets, and braces were all trim and taut, and the mettlesome ship began to prance to the heavy ground-swell, Charles R. Lawrence went aft and ran the beautiful ensign up and down at the peak, as a sailor's last greeting to his venerable father and his darling sister Nellie, to whom he had become far more attached than he knew till this moment.

Not a soul on board but thought Mr. Raymond was unwise in his decision to remain in the ship; and it is most likely that he thought so himself, just then. His real motive was known to but few. His resolution to remain greatly endeared him to his shipmates. More especially was his rejection of high social position appreciated by his dear old captain, who could not meet his young mate for days after without tears flooding his eyes. He best of all others knew why his young officer remained.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

BOUND FOR THE ABROLHOS.

AFTER leaving the anchorage at Recife, the wind held strong for nearly two days. The ship passed Cape St. Augustine before dark. She was then kept away two points, following down the trend of the coast to Bahia, which port she passed late the next day. Many homeward bound vessels were here met, under press of sail, dashing northward with a smother of foam about their bows.

Numerous other vessels were bound south; these the Fleetwing overhauled, and passed with ease. One was a large ocean steamer, under press of steam and sail; her passengers gathering about the quarter-rail, waving hats and handkerchiefs, so amazed to witness the ship — fleet and beautiful as a bird on the wing. This auspicious event caused a hilarious time among the Fleetwing's crew; and much was it needed, in their present morbid, moody state of feeling.

Meeting a full-sailed ship at sea is always a pleasant incident to all seagoing mortals. Though the meeting ships may pass at a distance, national colors are run up, and displayed for a moment; as two friends lift their hats to each other from afar. More often the strange ships approach near enough to exchange reckonings; then

each chalks his longitude on the gangway board, which is deemed a graceful sea-courtesy. Parting, the captains wave hands politely, and sail away to the world's end, in opposite directions.

But, alas! when a ship meets with broken spars, stoven boats, and dead seamen afloat on the solitary sea, it is an ominous event, that causes long-lasting horror among her crew. The worst superstitions of the most impressible and childish class of men are permanently aroused. Though sailors commiserate the sufferings of their class, and are charitable to the last cent in the locker, or the last shirt from the back, yet they shrink from witnessing death and disaster, as Satan avoids holy water. The simple fellows always attribute the accident which wrecks a vessel to some supernatural agency, and believe that meddling to prevent the full consummation of a disaster will surely transfer the evil agency upon themselves or their ship.

This terrorized condition had prevailed among the Fleetwing's lucky and well disciplined crew since they witnessed the gigantic horror at St. Paul, which event was the forecastle talk for many a week after. The chief problem that the croakers now sought to solve was: Through what evil agency would disaster come to their ship?

Some deemed that there might be a Jonah among the crew, who should be sought out by some fiery ordeal, and harried for the good of his soul. Others thought there were too many cats on board to expect that their ship would escape wreck; puss having littered since leaving the Azores. These argued that a petition ought to be

sent aft to the captain, humbly asking to have all but the lucky number of one or three cats drowned in the deep sea. These catists were easily quelled by their opponents declaring that the petitioners should drown the beasts; which they would not have done for the world. A few other cowardly snivellers declared that some of the ship's timbers had been "cut on a Sunday," and that, in spite of all the fine qualities of their loved craft, judgment would overtake her before the voyage was over.

But the most serious of all these fanatic delusions came from a small minority of the best seamen in the ship. These professed to have known from the day of sailing that Joe Bailey was leagued with Satan; adding, with a furtive glance, and in a sepulchral voice: "Death and wrecks will follow that durned one-eyed niggar wherever he goes."

These loquacious shellbacks declared, with most persuasive eloquence, that they had looked for some terrible mishap to the Fleetwing; and that nothing but their sagacious watchfulness had saved the ship so far. Chief among these nautical boobies were brave Tom Crawford, spoony old Ben, spook-seeing Nantucket Jim, and burly Bill Brown, the English blood-and-thunder croaker, who growled because of too much duff and salt horse as heartily as another might over starvation rations.

During the ship's first evening on the Abrolhos Bank, the wind fell light. The air was warm and pleasant on deck, but within the cabin it had become sultry and oppressive. The light breeze did not prevent the ship's rolling gently to the long, low undulation that ran under her keel and awoke discordant creakings from bulkheads

and partitions. Her roll imparted a slow, lazy swing to the brazen lamp hanging in the skylight of the main cabin; just enough motion to invoke life into the indolent shadow of every suspended thing; until strange, uncouth-looking objects flitted in and out under the table, upon which most uncanny transactions were taking place, sufficient to call forth the ghostly shapes seen creeping stealthily about among the sea-chests and chairs.

Captain Talbert and his weird old companion had for hours held possession of the dining-table; so absorbed in supernatural doings as to be oblivious to all else. Joe Bailey, the black prophet, was at work conjuring up whales from every ocean; using a kind of necromancy that makes one shudder to contemplate. Both men were grizzled with age, — if both really were men, — and they were alike brimming over with marvellous wisdom; sea-knowledge gleaned from half a century's experience in ocean-wallowings.

There they sat, the venerable white man and the ebony seer, pondering over time-stained sea-charts; the long black, shrivelled finger of the one tracing numerous pencillings of whale-flukes on the yellow charts — prophetic predictions about the great cachalots, now foretold months in advance. The labors of these gray old spouters were varied. Sometimes the captain found mention of whales in his musty old logs — records of long previous voyages. Then the sable-faced prophet would shut his one lone eye and turn his shrunken face upward, glancing introspectively over the distant ocean in question, with a solemn aspect of mystery and meaning; never failing to confute or confirm the present value of the place in

question as a whale-ground. At such times, the thin, sunken face of old Ebony looked as dead as the black mummy of Pharaoh.

When the captain's suggestions were not answered to his satisfaction, then Uncle Joe produced his own illiterate memoranda; some of which were written with a sail needle upon thin leaves of ivory, cut from the teeth of enormous whales which the old man had killed. From such quaint hieroglyphics he proved that only "passage whales" were ever seen at the designated places.

To a landsman, it might well seem absurd to thus study ancient ocean charts, seeking the mazy currents of the deep, by which to trace the pathless feeding-grounds of the nomadic cachalot. But immense sagacity can be, and often is shown, in searching the labyrinthine travel-ways of whales, along the known and the unknown seas. For the sperm whale is a worldwide wanderer, confined to no particular ocean or clime; but familiar with every ocean-river, shoal, and plateau; the resorts of the mighty octopus, and smaller sea-squid, upon which the whales fatten in the quarters of the moon; as a human gourmand thrives upon his capon and his cod.

The wide, scared eyes of superstitious seamen were at times seen peering in upon this mystic scene. Men inured to believe that an illiterate person, like Joe Bailey, could only be endowed with such supernatural wisdom through evil agency. One by one, their ghostly faces flitted past the window, spying upon the diabolical doings within, which inspired them with unaccountable terror. Sneaking forward upon the knightheads, they held secret conclave; and with low voices and bated breath sought

to fortify one another in their pet belief that old Nick abode among them, in the homely guise of a "durned one-eyed niggar."

Raymond had spent his evening with the ladies, in the after cabin, taking little interest in the witchcraft doings in the forward saloon. He left the ladies on the plea of writing his log. That done, he slipped out on deck to sit aft, where the breeze fanned down upon his face from the foot of the spanker, a nice place to cool off before turning in for the night.

As the mate sat facing the east, the great yellow moon came stealing up out of the sea, made big as a cartwheel by unusual refraction. The eastern horizon was barred with narrow bands of dark stratus-clouds, which imparted a sad and solemn appearance to the rising orb, and awoke a touch of home-longing in the sailor's heart.

He watched the moon climb past each of the obtruding vapors, until her glittering wake at length stole forth over the sea, like a breath of prayer. Saw her first coy beams glint across the dark bosom of the sails, until one by one they whitened to the sheen of marble.

Raymond had an innate affection for the sea, under whatever guise it presented itself, — whether tempestuous or tranquil. As it was the moon which imparted to the sea most of its varying moods of sublimity and beauty, he dearly loved the lunar orb, and was familiar with her every footprint upon the ocean, as well as with her subtle power over the human heart, which she prompts to emotional ebb and flow at as fixed periods as the ocean tides.

To-night it was with a retrospective eye that he saw

the lofty dog-vane glitter in the rising sheen, and witnessed the tiny sea-caps leap to kiss the moonbeams, like a herd of lovers, each foam-crest tinting its bursting bubbles with a score of prismatic hues. Raymond's heart was far away with his girl-love to-night, — she whom Luna had helped to win upon that fair September midnight, and had ever since prompted him to remember, as when she wept, at parting, on the distant shore.

Living over that whole painful scene of separation, the lover still felt the white arms of his pretty Mary Tudor clinging about his neck, as in that high cupola, overlooking the housetops and the harbor. He still heard her grievous sighs and girlish sobs commingled, as when she appealed to him with her great dark eyes to abjure the dreadful sea. It was a piteous scene for a lover to dwell upon, and yet there were priceless elements of pleasure in the theme ; for only a strong, true love could thus grieve over a parting. So argued the fond lover for the thousandth time.

It is the special heritage of sailors to repeatedly ponder over their brief home-life, and its transient moments of love, upon such nights as this. How long Raymond sat there, steeped in delicious reverie, and lost to his surroundings, he knew not.

A sigh, tender as a moonbeam, fell upon his ear, followed by a low, soft voice at his side, which served to arouse him. Alas! it was not his Mamie, as he had first conceived. He turned and saw Miss Allston watching him with a look of sadness and sympathy upon her face. Such an intrusion is a critical test for a lover's temper. But the girl was more than a match for the man.

"Oh, Mr. Raymond, even you, who are so familiar with the sea, are as homesick to-night as I am. I heard you murmuring your dear Mamie's name so piteously that tears came to my eyes, and I could not forbear proffering my sympathy. How terrible such separations as yours must be."

"Yes, I find it so. It's a new experience to me. But I don't wish to get sentimental about it. See how sweetly the moon looks yonder over the weather-bow," not wishing to seem too spoony in the presence of this matter-of-fact girl.

"Yes, it bewitches everything it shines upon. Truly, I couldn't stay in the cabin another minute, when I saw her. I just wished that I had wings to fly away where I could find some one to love me"; and the girl gave birth to a bouncing sigh, on her own lovelorn account. Raymond would rather have been left to silence, but this appeal from the girl claimed his attention.

"Moonlight is indeed very bewitching. See how it tips the little wave-tops with rainbows."

"And how joyous the sleepy ship starts up to greet the charming Cynthia. Ah, wouldn't you be a happy man were Mary Tudor here to-night?" A woman so hankers to dabble in the love of another, if she has not a Cupid of her own to hatch.

"That's the kind of joy I was picturing when you came out. But 'twill be many a long year before Mary and I can watch the moon together,"—words that were made doubly sad by the manly sigh which followed them.

"I wish I could have seen and known Miss Tudor. She ought to be bright, as well as beautiful, to merit such love as yours."

"I believe she is all the heart of man could wish. She is young, and unformed, but will make a noble woman. — See how the trades have freshened since the moon came up, ready to bear you to your lover at the Islands, while I am torn, heart from heart, from mine."

"Oh, dear me!" — said with a visible touch of impatience. "It's so long since I parted with Mr. Richards that I don't know how we may be suited to each other now." It was a topic which the girl did not relish with Raymond.

"I believe him to be a man of character, and think he will make you a good mate."

"God grant it may be so. But it's a strange adventure for a girl to undertake."

"Yet, it is not uncommon for girls to go out to Honolulu, and wed their old lovers. We took out a young lady with us voyage before last, and Father Damon came aboard and married them before she landed."

"Oh, yes, it's done, I presume. But it is not a nice thing to do. I almost wish I had gone home with Nellie Lawrence, as she wished me to."

"Why didn't you? You two are so well adapted to live together."

"I felt drawn in another direction. But should have gone with her, if you had. How could *you* find the heart to refuse such a beautiful creature?"

"A man should trust to his own right arm in hewing his way to a position in life. My new father and sister will not love me the less for the independence I have shown. Besides, it were best that Nellie and I should be separated for a while; that you all could see. She is a darling girl,

and I love her dearly. I am not situated so as to fulfil all her requirements." This was the only explanation Raymond had given to any one but Nellie of his dealings with the Lawrences.

"Oh, Mr. Raymond, I envy such a precious home-love as yours. And how I hate this foreign mission that I am on," and every word which the sad girl uttered was steeped in tears.

"Mine is a better state of things, all but this heart-rending separation. — Why, there's eight bells! How came I to keep you out here till eleven o'clock?"

"I guess we're both a little interested in the topic," she said, indulging in a silly, girlish giggle; which is the usual accompaniment of such love-talks by moonlight.

"Perhaps so. But it's time we were in our berths."

"I don't care about it's being late, if you don't."

"I do care. I should have thought for us both."

And the gallant fellow took the unwilling girl by the hand, and led her down the poop stairs; bidding her good-night at his state-room door; wholly unconscious whether he returned the warm pressure of her hand, at the last, or not.

Yet there were times when a person of Raymond's strong virility could not help admiring — almost loving — the lithe, slender figure and delicate beauty of Asenith Allston. Her sparkling, animated manners and piquant talk never failed to charm him. And though the fellow prated to himself about the robust physical charms of his Mary, surely he was sufficient connoisseur to realize that a trifle more contour would greatly improve Miss Allston: take the sharp edge from her pliant tongue; curb her free

manners; and make her a yet more enticing companion for a sea-voyage, if not for the voyage of life.

Sad it is that however trifling this lack of normal development may be, it is all-sufficient to rob a woman of the exquisite, subtle power to fix a man's affection beyond recall — as the polarity of the needle is irrevocable fixed by the magnet. The girl's frequent confidential chats with the susceptible mate, were certainly weaving a strong bond of sympathy between them; and as there is no place like the lonely nights at sea, in which to put a sailor under confessional, — one of the chief by-laws of ship-board, being "No secrets off soundings," — there is no telling what may yet come to pass before the voyage is over.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE TWO JILTED MATES.

EARLY the next morning a sail hove in sight coming down the Brazilian coast. The Fleetwing was headed in towards the Abrolhos Islands, keeping a bright look-out for whales. The new-comer showed desire to speak, so the courses were brailed up, and the head yards flung aback, to permit the stranger to run down. The vessel proved to be the Rainbow, Captain Plasket, who was an old friend of Captain Talbert. She had sailed two months after the Fleetwing, and brought quite a mail-bag for her people.

Raymond had letters from his mother, sister, and several other friends, but not a word from Mary Tudor. The hot blood rushed to his face as this awkward fact dawned fully upon him, when Mrs. Talbert called him into the cabin to give him his letters. When the sympathizing woman saw how deeply he was affected by Mary's neglect, she burst into tears, pushed the mate into his state-room, and shut the door upon him. It was a blow to her, for the Talberts had introduced them. It was a stain upon the womanhood of New Bedford, for the number of its infidelities during the long whaling voyages was so numerous that a truthful woman was a rare enigma in that sink of iniquity.

Raymond did not open any of his letters, but locked them up in his chest, and sat down upon it; dazed and oblivious to all about him. It is so hard to realize such an unexpected blow. It is so dreadful to blot out of existence such an ideal creation, as that which Raymond had reared around the callow semblance of Mary Tudor. It was a strong man's first glimpse of Elysium, and he had lavished his richest emotions at the alluring shrine.

Sitting there with his eyes fixed upon vacancy, he arrayed the pros and cons in judgment before him. He argued: The Tudors live in New Bedford, and knew that the Rainbow would bring letters to the Fleetwing. How could my Mary fail to write? What could induce such neglect, two months after such earnest assurance of love?

But then, per contra, he argued: No news may not mean bad news. I should keep up hope till the next ship follows. The Peacock sailed a week before; perhaps Mamie has written by that vessel. The dear girl could not mean to neglect me, who love her so dearly!

Such arguments ought to have lifted the weight from his heart, but they did not. He would have struck down a person, at that moment, who should have hinted at Miss Tudor's infidelity. He had not yet mastered that fact himself; and he would have resented hasty judgment in another. It was a long time dawning upon him that the Talberts must have all the facts in their letters, and he could have these facts for the asking. But he would not ask. It awakened his ire to think of one of those life-long friends waiting at his door to announce:—

"Poor fellow! So you are jilted."

He feared to hear the base slur shouted from the mast-

head, as one listens to hear, There she blows! He had twice heard the low voice of Mrs. Talbert, forbidding Braybrook, or the steward, intruding upon his privacy. It at length dawned upon him that he must face this thing; as he would face a fighting whale. It was a foregone conclusion that he was a jilted lover. He had faced deadlier perils, and he came to think he could survive this, and he went out on deck and ordered a pull at the jib-halyards, and the weather royal sheet.

The two captains were old friends. Plasket brought the mail aboard himself, and, upon invitation, concluded to spend the day. It was agreed that the ships should "mate," if they lowered in the same school together. Plasket asked Raymond to go aboard the Rainbow and spend the day with Mr. Gifford, who was an acquaintance of his.

Glad to get clear of his own ship for a while, the larboard boat was lowered away, and Raymond tried to enliven up a little, and have a pleasant gam with his old friend; who was now on his fourth voyage mate. A man of large experience with whales, but who was not known to be a teetotaller. The two mates met, with hearty greetings. Gifford could hardly believe his own ears. when told that the Fleetwing had taken over a thousand barrels of sperm oil. He came near swallowing his cud, in concocting a suitable expletive for the occasion; and remarked: —

"Well, Charlie, I s'pose Dave Braybrook done ar good part o' yer whalin'? I teld your Agent thet he did ar big thing when he shipped Dave as second fiddle in your craft."

"Mr. Braybrook hasn't been as fortunate as was expected. But he's a first-class man, nevertheless; and I like him as a shipmate."

"How's thet? Dave allus made himself heard when we were together. How many on um has he tuck?"

"Out of fifteen whales taken to the ship, Braybrook counts two to his boat."

"Who'n thunder did tuck 'em, if Dave didn't?"

"Joe Bailey and I had the luck to strike among school whales, and Braybrook did good service in saving the extra whales, some of which ought to count to the waist-boat. But our friend is a little touchy on that point, and wouldn't reckon anything he didn't strike at first hand."

So the time whiled pleasantly away between the mates, though Raymond would neither wine it, nor smoke, nor chew the universal weed with his friend; who was addicted to all the graces. About mid-afternoon, Gifford mentioned among other home news, the arrival of the barque Skipjack, Captain Bonney; and casually added:—

"They say Bonney is goin' to marry Mary Tudor, of Purchase Street, Cap'n Jim's da'ter."

"The deuce he is!" exclaimed Raymond, with unfeigned surprise; for Captain Bonney was a very inferior sort of man.

"Oh, yes, I think thet splicin' bus'ness wus all settled 'fore we sailed."

"Why, Gifford, that girl was engaged to me."

"The devil an' Tom Walker!—Come ter think uv it, Chaulie," exclaimed the old mate, with a look of commiseration creeping into his face, "I did hearn say thet you had the little craft in tow, while at home. Nuthin' ser'ous,

I hope. For, sartinly, she wouldn't gin up a spruce young mate, like you, for sich ar lopsided old Ballyhoo as Bonney"; and Gifford leisurely blew away the cloud of smoke from before him, and gave a sly, abashed leer into the face of his companion.

"We were engaged to be married, my friend, and I had no reason to doubt that the girl loved me dearly."

"Sorry to hear thet, Chaulie. 'Twas said widder Tudor druv the barg'in. She said: 'Ar bird in hand is the p'int fur wimin ter look arter.' She tuck the helm, an' forced the gal on. Bonney had made ar good v'y'ge, an' wuz minded ter gin up the sea. Thet wuz the bait what tuck the gal."

"Well, Gifford, if Mary Tudor finds herself better suited with Captain Bonney, I ought not to complain."

"Tell yer what, maty, Bedford am ar cussed bad place ter house yer best bower. Female critters is like ar broken-backed ship; the damage is under water, an' yer don't see it. But e'en amost all wimin folks is hogged in the keel, an' unsound in the heart. Some on um will run well 'nough when goin' free, an' in ballast; but jus' put em close haul, an' load em up with yer hopes an' yer happiness, an' they'll sartinly founder every feller they take in tow."

"There's a great lack of fidelity among the Bedford women, I believe. This is my first experience, and the last."

"Fidelity! There ain't no sich wimin folks in the place. Why look yer, boy! Geordie Gifford has bin tuck in eleven times by the critters"; and the grave old mate dwelt seriously on the eleventh *invisible finger*, to see if

there were not twelve unfaithful loved ones; as he solemnly numerated the Sallies, Pollies, Mollies, etc., who had jilted him during the past forty years.

"And were you never married in all that time."

"Nary a time, my lad. One o' my last girls came the nearest to stickin' of any on um. For yer see, bub, I courted two at a lick thet time home."

"Why, Gifford, you wretch, how did you do that?"

"One ter time didn't succeed with me, an' as double tops'ils wuz jus comin' in fashion on ships, I applied double gals to the shore-craft. It kept a feller thunderin' busy, makin' and takin' in sail. One wuz ar Bedford gal, an' t'other wuz ar Fairhaven widder. I courted the gal durin' the full run o' the flood; an' played spoony with the widdy from the ebb to half-tide.

"Widdy Loveum had 'nuther feller — a sort o' second fiddle ter me. He came across the bay frum Dartmouth to do his courtin'. Loveum wuz squar' with me; she 'lowed thet Bill Wiggin wuz the best feller for her, bein' ar shore chap; but she didn't think he'd stick; an if Bill sloped, she'd splice with me. I thought Bill's chance wuz better nor mine, so I toted over ter Bedford every flood, ter court Susie Brown durin' high water.

"Sue wuz ar bloomer! A craft what could sail by, or large; an' tow ar half dozen sich as me, without strainin' sheet, tack, or bowlin'. I'd ruther have got spliced ter Sue than the widdy; so I shined my own boots, an' perfumed my ha'r with cajapugy ile, an' tuck the best of the tide ter win her. I left home engaged ter two on um. But I didn't truly 'spose thet I should marry more'n one o' the critters." He took a whiff at his pipe, and fell into

a reverie, from which it required a nudge from Raymond to arouse him.

"Well, George, which one of the ladies did you select?"

"Nuther one on em. Sue Brown shifted her anchorage a month arter I sailed, an' married an outfittin' son of a gun durin' the year; an' has got ar blubber-room full o' young uns now. Widdy Loveum kept up her hyfalutin' love letters till the ship wuz homeward bound, full to the carlines. I brought lots of presents, ter have a jolly good weddin'. I shaved my face all the home passage, an' put cocoanut ile on my ha'r, tryin' ter look sweet an' youngish for the 'casion. But law bless yer, Chaulie, Loveum turned to Bill Wiggin long 'fore I arriv' home, an' I found her nussin' ar small Wiggin when I called on 'er. So I gin 'er the presents, all the same; stood granther to the brat, let my beard grow, sold my ha'r ile to ar barber, an' never left my best bower at home arter thet, you bet."

"Ah, Gifford, you have had a hard time of it."

"Yes, Chaulie, it's ar tarnal crooked way o' doing things. But sailor-chaps git hardened to it arter a while: then, 'any port in ar storm' for the rest o' life."

"What excuse did the New Bedford girl make, Gifford?" hoping to glean some little glimpse of reason why an honest girl should thus jilt her lover.

"Oh, she teld ar good story. They all duz. She said she'd hearn tell o' my tipplin' in foreign ports — think o' thet — an' she feared the habit mought grow onter me. Blame it! I signed the pledge thet time home, jist to quiet the gal; an' I never tuck more 'n four glasses ar day arter thet, on ship or shore. Durned onreasonable critters, wimin folks is."

Just then the deck officer called down the cabin gangway to say that the Fleetwing had hauled aback, and made a signal of recall at the gaff. The mates shook hands heartily at parting, for a new bond of sympathy had sprung up between them, which Gifford tenderly expressed by his looks and the strong grip of his hand at parting.

The breach of a large whale had been seen far to windward, and as the Fleetwing was expected to outsail the Rainbow, both captains thought best to end the gam. When the larboard boat was fairly on the cranes, all sail was made, and the yards braced up sharp for a close haul.

Nearly an hour passed before further signs of the whales were seen. It was then found that the school was heading with the ship, on a course a little more off from the wind. When the whales went down, the ship tacked to the south for half an hour, and then went in stays again, heading nearly in the wake of the school.

The Fleetwing had gained two miles to windward of the Rainbow when the whales came up near enough for lowering. The three larboard boats were sent down, and got a good position, while the school was sounding. Raymond had purposely given Braybrook the lead, and when the whales came up near at hand, the waist-boat went on and struck first. The school appeared confused for a time, and both the mate and Uncle Joe ran among them and fastened.

The whales went down before any of them could be lanced. They ran slowly off to leeward, so that the four boats from the Rainbow were ready to take a chance at

them when they came up. Captain Plasket and Gifford got fast, which sent the school running to windward at top speed.

The five fast whales kept among the loose ones, which were too much scattered for the boats to secure any more. Raymond killed his whale first, his example being followed by the four other boats in rapid succession. Both ships took their whales alongside just before sunset, and the next day was busily spent in cutting.

As no other whales were seen while the boiling and stowing were going on, the ships gave up their afternoons and evenings to pleasant gams, Captain Plasket almost always coming aboard the Fleetwing.

Twice Mr. Gifford came to visit Raymond. The poor fellow was so much smitten with Miss Allston, he declared that he did nothing but dream about her, and asserted, honestly, that if she would take passage in his ship, he would break his vow, and "buckle down an' count the twelfth gal, in spite o' thunder."

The five whales made three hundred barrels, and as the ships were mated, the Fleetwing had to give thirty barrels of her oil to Captain Plasket, making a hundred and fifty barrels for each. This catch made the Fleetwing's total one thousand one hundred and fifty-two barrels.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE PHANTOM KISSES.

A FORTNIGHT passed since the last whales were taken, before another was seen. The day had been so nearly calm that the Rainbow was unable to approach for her usual gam. The whale was a large, lone one, and took fright from hearing the captain's boat approaching in the calm sea. He went down heading toward the other ship, but was not seen again by the lookouts on either vessel.

As evening set in, the mild trade-winds ventured timidly in toward the land again. There was just sufficient breeze to set the young waves galloping over the glassy surface. The mimic billows purled up into little plumy crests as they ran romping after each other, breaking with a low ripple of laughter like the voices of children when playing on the village green.

A modest streak of new moon tinted the evening sky with mild radiance, in delicious keeping with the tranquil night. It was a timid tropic moon, coyly borrowing the tiniest thread of light from the departed sun. The moon hung so clear in the western sky that the whole circle of the shadowed orb was seen limned about with a faint rim of gold, meet cincture for a vestal at her evening prayers.

The sun went down a little to the north of Luna,

leaving the gorgeous drapery of his couch undrawn during the brief vespers of a tropic twilight. The crimson bars of stratus-clouds lingered longer than usual ere they donned their accustomed purple, and were lifted above the moon by the influence of the land-wind beyond. With folded hands the meek-faced Cynthia sat throned in the west on a pearl-gray pyramid of zodiacal light — itself an unsolved mystery of the stellar world.

When the last ray of refracted sunlight had fairly departed, there was not sufficient light reflected from the young moon to illuminate the deepening shades of night. What light there was was of the kind that tends to people the dusky solitude of the sea with grim phantoms; impalpable apparitions, shaped according to the varying texture of the individual brain.

A keen observer might easily trace the psychal effect of this sudden sea-change upon all on board. Among the sailors, who had been dancing merry jigs and singing roistering songs on the forecastle, the change was magical. The dancing ceased, as by a mandate. The singing was confined to a few sentimental groups, whose low-voiced songs were aptly keyed to the sad and solemn hour. A group of the older seamen instinctively gathered about the windlass-bitts and knightheads, urging one of their number to relate some dismal sea-yarn, while they sat about the speaker smoking their everlasting pipes. As the hoarse, sepulchral voice of the story-teller peopled the dusky gloom with spooks and other uncanny creatures, he aroused the superstitious fears of his illiterate audience, till one by one they gathered nearer and nearer about him; as if the author of these ghostly sea-yarns had the

power to protect them from the terrors which he had created.

The officers, who had briskly walked the quarter-deck till the sun went down, were now seen gathered about the weather-rail, amidships. There was a tone of tender solicitude in their voices, while they talked of home and planned projects of improvement for the future happiness of their dear ones, should the voyage continue as prosperous as it had begun. This home-sentiment, on shipboard, becomes the strongest incentive for officers and boat-steerers to each do his best for the general good of all; while the homeless shellback of the forecastle knows no higher interest than the debasing allurements of one port after another — not only throughout the voyage, but during his whole aimless life. Yet, on these lonely nights, one and all are greatly dependent on companionship for their very existence.

Miss Allston had watched the bewitching sunset scene from her cabin window, and more than all others felt the sudden sense of solicitude for companionship when the encroaching darkness crept like an eerie into her soul. When she went up into the cabin, Mrs. Talbert was just ordering lights; then she and the captain devoted themselves to a frolic with their child; wholly oblivious of the lonely girl, — who stood looking upon the pretty domestic scene.

It suddenly occurred to Asenith Allston that there was no niche in any human heart open to receive her. Then she thought of Raymond, with this great weight of newfound sorrow to bear, through such a lonely hour. With tremulous lips and tearful eyes she stole out upon deck,

hoping to exchange a word of condolence with one for whom her heart had ached through all the long day. The busy scenes of boiling, and visiting back and forth with the other ship, had debarred their meeting alone for two weeks; but the warm-hearted girl had daily reflected and mourned over his sufferings with more profound sympathy than any other.

She groped her way aft to the taffrail, and stood alone in the silence; peering about her, she unconsciously drank in the weird influence pervading the night. The girl's back was to the moon; and she reverently turned her eyes to the stars, which gemmed the cloudless canopy. The fore and mainsails were hanging in the brails, so that the girl could just distinguish, with ear and eye, the group of officers in the waist; and dimly discern the phantom-like clusters of men on the forward deck. A sense of loneliness and awe crept over her; a feeling of utter desolation, lest none should ever love and care for her.

When Asenith turned, and discovered the delicate crescent in the west, a great sigh of relief escaped the homesick girl. She was startled, to hear her sigh echoed back from the dismal gloom. Hearkening, she heard numerous responsive expirations coming from another lonely soul, somewhere in the solemn darkness.

Peering sharply about her in the starlit gloom, she discovered Raymond, seated alone in the weather quarter boat. With a cry of relief, she asked with mock humility if she might keep him company. The mate answered by rising and giving the girl his hand; steadying her carefully into the boat, where he had hoped to seclude himself from all intrusion.

"Dear me!" sighed the half weeping girl, well knowing that her company was not wanted, "what a sad and lonesome time this is; I never felt so forsaken before."

"It is a precious hour to me; in keeping with my thoughts, as I have sat here brooding over the past, and called up the loved faces to people the ghostly gloom."

"What delicious home-plans are you contemplating? Come, be kind, and take me into your confidence; for I feel so lonely and unloved at this moment that I wish I had never been born." It was the cry of a drowning soul; and for a moment Raymond aroused from his selfish mood of grief to lend the girl a helping hand.

"And did you, too, receive unpleasant news from home?" As if unhappiness could only be doled out to a jilted lover.

"Oh, no; my home-news was all I could ask. Let me hope, Mr. Raymond, that you are not brooding over the one sad event which lies most heavily upon your heart." All unconsciously the girl laid her hand gently upon Raymond's arm, a natural gesture, intended to impress him with her profound sympathy.

"Ah, Miss Allston, this is an hour when the saddest experience of our lives is sure to find us out, and fasten upon us with tooth and nail, whether we will or no"; and the sad fellow sighed lustily, as if the confession had given relief.

"I feared as much. But, dear friend, it is not good for us to dwell upon the irrevocable. Come, please talk to me about some of the future plans you spoke of."

The sympathetic fingers upon Raymond's arm slid quickly down upon his hand, as it lay on the gunwale of

the boat; pressing it tenderly, as if to further impress the girl's plea for his confidence.

"Bless you! The great charm has suddenly gone out of all my ambitious schemes. I can't find an instant's pleasure groping into the future, as before this hateful news came to me." The grieved fellow gripped the gunwale, which lay beneath his imprisoned hand, with a clutch of strong agony that horrified his companion at this evidence of his suffering.

"Oh, oh! Mr. Raymond, they have told me that you were strong, and had the iron resolution to put this deceptive girl out of your memory forever. Will you, must you, cling to that sweet delusion; that hateful, unreal dream, whose subject you ought to hate for her infidelity?" The girl's hand clutched the mate's as strongly as his grasped the gunwale.

"Never fear, I've strength and latent resolution enough to master this matter as you would wish — in time. But there is an element of mystery in this affair, which prompts curiosity, and tempts a philosophic mind to ponder and explore the nature of this girl. It horrifies me to think of her passionate love being so easily turned into indifference, if not hate."

"It is an element of great unhappiness to you, and of deep regret to all who love you. Do, please, cast all thought of that hateful creature from you."

"Ah, my little friend, that's easier said than done. I deem it best to explore this hateful problem; lest I find myself at enmity with the whole universe of women, because of the foul blot this one base girl has put upon the integrity of her sex."

"Dear me! has the poisoned arrow struck so deep as that?"

"Yes, it rankles to the core. The incision must be deep and thorough to probe to the bottom of such a wound as this."

"Will you not let me help you to solve this grave problem?"

"Not to-night. There may be questions I shall wish to ask you and Mrs. Talbert; but not yet. The capital operation is suicidal, and can be done by no other hand than mine."

"Well, so be it. Captain Talbert has been telling us this afternoon that you are to have the ship when we arrive at Honolulu. He will return home, and you are to continue the voyage as master."

"Ah, that is news to me. I knew that I was to have the ship after we have filled her."

"His statement was very explicit. So you see, dear friend, that you should plan your plans anew. The future is bright and beautiful before you."

"Yet ambition is now as dead within me as the wooden gunwale beneath my hand."

"Oh, Mr. Raymond, be strong, be noble! It is your nature, and your birthright, to be brave and good. Forget this corroding grief, and tell your little friend where you will make your voyage when you become captain of the beautiful ship"; but she could elicit no reply.

All unwittingly, the girl's hand stole into the cold palm of her sad and silent companion. Raymond clasped the warm, soft fingers, without a thought of what he was doing. His perceptions were sluggish, for the moment; and his

heart so pre-occupied that he did not even note the quick, pleasurable thrills that ran riot through his frame, imparted by the sympathetic touch of the winsome girl.

For a long half-hour they remained in the boat, dumb as statues. Tireless and tongueless, Asenith sat clinging to Raymond's hand, trebly content with her situation at his side; with the solitude and the fostering shelter of the darkness; and with the oblivious mood of her companion, though he ignored her very existence.

It seemed to the bewildered girl almost like a full consummation of her wishes. Her heart was full to the brim with affection for Raymond at that moment; exulting to the glad timbrel of the mimic seas; beating in unison with the bell-music of the little waves as they purled up into tiny crests, and ran romping after each other. Above all, she was entranced with the roguish smacks of the kissing billows, as they leaped in childish rapture against the smooth copper of the ship.

The girl's eyes and ears became attuned to every sight and sound about her. While noting the alternate sighs and tumultuous breathing of her loved companion, she lent an ear to the soft rising breeze as it gently careened the vessel, till ship and moon leaned tenderly over toward each other, like lovers seeking a good-night greeting.

She watched the slow westing of the baby moon as it sank to rest, and saw her waning light glimmering its farewell sheen on the dusky sails. Saw the vast pyramid of canvas clinging like a ghostly mist about the invisible masts, as unreal as clouds, floating along with the ship, while the vessel glided on into the impenetrable gloom.

The moon had nearly set when Raymond aroused to

the conviction that he had a companion at his side. Realizing that the hour was late, he admonished Asenith that it was time she were in bed. As the fond girl still clung fast to his hand, without offering to move, mechanically he gave voice to his thoughts. Pointing to the last little finger-tip of the crescent lingering above the sea, he said : —

"That streak of moon is a fateful thing, more ominous to us than we know. It points us onward to the south, away from the dear home-land, for which we long, but which we shall not see for many a long year."

And again he dropped into silence. It seemed as if his thoughts had been of home, and, tiring of the hateful problem which he had failed to solve, he now wished that he might return, and confront pretty Mary Tudor, and ask of her a thoughtless girl's reason for a heartless girl's act.

When the moon disappeared over the ocean-rim, and left the ship and sea in darkness, a dual sigh came rustling down out of the quarter-boat, then low voices were heard exchanging a tender good-night in the sudden gloom. If the listening ears are capable of vouching for what they hear — competent to distinguish between the kisses of purling waves and the flesh-and-blood kisses of human lips — then a kiss, one or more, was heard taking advantage of the darkness, as many a maiden's first-time kiss has been known to do before.

To just what category of osculation these phantom lip-greetings belong, is most difficult to determine. The respondent kiss, which was the louder of the two, evidently came from an overladen heart ; one too grief-stricken to admit being in love with the charming girl at his side. On

the other hand, none can doubt but the initial kiss meant more in Asenith Allston's heart than she designed, for she was a free, but not a forward girl.

May it not be that the pretty minx had so long watched the moon kissing the sails, and heard the waves kissing the ship, that her little head got bewildered with the delicious smacks seen and heard about her, until at length her impulsive heart leaped to her mouth, and laid bare her love upon the lips of the man she adored? A catastrophe that has happened to many another maiden, when lured on by opportunity and darkness, — a most alluring pair.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE BATTLE OF THE GIANTS.

DURING the afternoon of the third day's cruising off River La Plata, a sail hove in sight, far to windward, heading out from the land. The vessel was supposed to be a Monte Video craft by her sluggish movement, coming from Rat Island, and no interest was taken in her. But after a while she squared away and ran down before the wind, to the surprise of all, as if she wished to speak the Fleetwing. Even then, little notice was taken of the clumsy old tub, until the officer aloft called out to say that she was a whaler.

Captain Talbert ordered the mainsail up, and backed the mainyards. The ship proved to be the Emerald, Captain Bunkum, a century-old vessel from Nantucket. She was homeward bound, forty months out, with but two thousand barrels of sperm-oil. They had seen whales enough to fill four ships, but drunkenness and mismanagement were at the bottom of their ill-luck.

Captain Bunkum, and his profane brother Bill, the second mate, came aboard and spent the evening. Bunkum was going to cruise there a month, hoping to add something to his poor voyage. He could hardly believe his ears when told of the Fleetwing's success. Unlucky as he was, he was nevertheless a wise old sperm-whaler. He

advised to cruise toward the shore in the forenoon, and head offshore in the afternoon, to keep the sun at the back of the lookouts. Bunkum had seen whales thereabout several times, but had got none. Something had happened to prevent, he said, — his rummy breath was sufficient hint of what it might have been. When the captains separated, Bunkum promised to run off five miles during the night, that one ship should not interfere with the other's chance the next day.

Raymond was not well pleased with what he had seen aboard the Emerald, nor the drunken company he found there. It was a scene of filth and indolence; everything hanging with fag-ends. Tidy old Ben and Tom were also disgusted. Buntline said: "Sweepin' decks, 'board o' there, means ter hide yer dirt 'hind casks, an' under Chip's work-bench. An' poor whiskey was tuck at meal times, 'stead o' coffee an' t'a."

Early the next morning, when the hands were called out to make sail, it was discovered that the Emerald had played sharp practice on the Fleetwing. Instead of running off five miles to leeward, as agreed upon the night before, she had taken position four miles ahead of the Fleetwing, leaving the latter to follow over the grounds which the former had overlooked.

There was a howl of indignation among the men, while making sail; and they wove in an angry chorus about the contemptible Bunkum, every sail they hoisted. Raymond was so piqued at the unfair transaction that he ordered every drawing sail set. Bracing up sharp, and keeping near to the wind, yet rap-full, the fine sailing qualities of the ship soon took her abeam of the Emerald, and about two

miles to windward. This course was held until after breakfast, when the ship was two miles ahead, and three miles to windward of her companion.

Braybrook was aloft, and hailed the deck to say that the Emerald was keeping away a little; and that several extra men had gathered at her mastheads, some of whom were pointing spyglasses down off their lee-bow; but as yet nothing could be seen.

The mate had the best eyesight in the ship, and at a hint from the captain he caught up his glass and went aloft to help Braybrook scan the ground closely. The whales were down, and nothing could be seen; yet both officers were satisfied that whales had been seen from the Emerald and advised the ship's being kept boldly away; taking the chance of being up with the school in time to lower with the Emerald. This was done. Yards were squared in, spanker and mainsail brailed up, and the course laid so as to bisect the Emerald's track two miles ahead of her present position.

After the Fleetwing had run off a mile and a half, a small breach was seen right ahead, about three miles distant. The Emerald kept away, heading for the whales, she being about half a mile the nearest; and as the wind was dropping, she hoisted her boats, ready to lower at a moment's notice. The two ships ran down within a mile of the whales, which proved to be a large school of cows and calves; and promised a good catch for both ships, whichever boats should fasten first.

The three larboard boats were lowered from both ships. The two captains remained on board to direct matters. The Emerald's boats imprudently took oars, as well as

sails, which compelled the Fleetwing's boats to do the same, even at the risk of startling the whales. This incident showed a spirit of desperation, if not unfairness, in Bunkum, at the start. It said, plain as words: If we can't catch the whales, you sha'n't.

By shooting his boat out from under the lee-bow quickly, Bailey got the start of the others, and kept the lead to the end. The old man's movements were more sprightly and aggressive than usual, and it was afterwards made known that he knew, at the start, that the day was his. The bow-boat was the best puller on board. Thus the other two officers were well satisfied to pit Joe Bailey, and his fast boat, against the boastful Bill Bunkum, who had grossly insulted their venerable old shipmate the day before.

This disagreeable Bunkum purposely strayed away from among his own boats, and sidled over toward the Fleetwing's; with the malicious intent of pulling in ahead of Uncle Joe, and depriving him of all chance at the whales. This seemed all the more aggravating when there were countless numbers of whales directly under the lee of the Emerald. This incident engendered bad blood at the start, but the sequel proved more than satisfactory.

Though all the six boats dashed along at a spanking rate, the two antagonistic boats easily kept the lead, and seemed well matched for speed, keeping about equidistant from the whales. Just when all eyes aboard the ships were eagerly watching to see Bailey and Bunkum fasten, up popped a school of big killers, — sea bloodhounds of the whale species, — and dashed furiously among the whales. This so alarmed the motherly cows for their

calves, that they hastily secured their young, and ran heads out, fast as they could bolt, to leeward. The ships kept away and followed on after the boats, which could look for no chance to fasten at present.

After an hour's hard harrying of the school, the killers devoured their fill of calves, and gave up the chase. The whales soon began to slow up, and run at a more moderate pace; not quite so fast as the boats could sail. During the fracas with the killers, Bunkum and Bailey kept along nip-and-tuck, within easy hail, neither permitting the other to get the lead; and without any special incentive to buckle to their oars in such a long-winded race.

Soon after the killers left, a large cow, having a small calf which could no longer hold on to her back, straggled out astern of the school, right ahead of Uncle Joe. After pulling a few strokes and observing that Bunkum did not attempt to deprive him of his chance, the old veteran peaked his oars and endeavored to approach the whale carefully under sail.

Bunkum kept straight on ahead with his oars, as if innocently intent upon his own business, and wholly oblivious of the bow-boat's chance. But when his boat had gained about three times her length in advance of Bailey's, and he saw that he could sheer quickly off and steal the lead from his black brother, he could not resist the temptation, and wheeled and pulled for Uncle Joe's whale like a madman.

Finding himself tricked by the white wretch, fired Joe Bailey with righteous indignation; and he took to his oars, determined to regain his lost ground. The Nan-

tucket crew had been long inured to pulling during their forty months' voyage, and they handled their oars with consummate skill. Their well limbered boat was as pliant on the water as an eel, yielding easily to the sinuous rise and fall of the sea. These were great advantages over Bailey's firm new boat, and the lack of uniform motion in his less practised crew.

But Bailey's boat was longer; built upon finer lines; and was handled at the steering-oar with much greater intelligence than Bunkum's. The Bedford boat was the fastest of all the cedar shells of the Fleetwing, and, if equally well handled, would outspeed the other.

As to the boat-headers, it was 'Tucket against 'Tucket, as to their birthright, and any other prestige — except color — that the famous sand Island could impart of merit to her skilled race of whalemen.

However evenly balanced the boats might be, Joe Bailey was steadily gaining on his opponent, though it was questionable if there was sufficient time to pass Bunkum before he could strike the whale. But a new element of vantage now arose. The excitable 'Sconset man grew so fidgety at the steady gain of his black rival that he soon checked the speed of his own boat by stamping, swearing, and dancing round the stern-sheets while importuning his crew to greater exertions.

On the contrary, Uncle Joe kept time to every movement of the boat, as she surged down over the long loping seas; thus helped, rather than deterred her speed, with the rhythmic swaying motion of his ungainly body. This vantage was so evident to the Nantucket spouter, that he fairly boiled with rage; hurtling his vile maledictions upon his men, in most unseemly manner.

"What, 'Tuckets! Is we uns to be beaten by ar damned right-whaler? Pull, you infernal devils!" shouted the bilious brute, as he threw down his seedy hat, and jumped on it. "Will yer let thet durned one-eyed niggar pass us? Buckle to yer oars, yer low-lived cusses; if there's ar drop o' white blood in yer veins"; and he danced and swore to the tune of his own vituperations.

"Doan yer min' dem yar wicked white folks, chilun," exclaimed the saintly old man, who had become soft as pussy-down, while Bunkum's oaths rattled about his ears. "Pull har-r-d, honeys. A lon-n-g, lubly stroke. Eh, ar, dat's um! See 'er scoot, on de top ob dat sea;" and the sweet-tempered old darkey grew brimful of fun as he witnessed the rage of his white brother; who, having stolen another man's chance at a whale, showed an amazing dislike at being chased as a thief.

"Do yer hear thet niggar? Blast him! he's laffin at we old sparm-whalers; 'cause we can't pull ar boat. Confound yer, wake up! Pull, an' yer shall have plum-duff fur dinner every day." The poor fellows rarely got it once a week. Bunkum had purposely changed his tune —experimentally,— aping the soft words of his ebony brother in the other boat.

"Pull hard, Jose boy; an', honey, ke'p yer port eye on yer ole farder. When dis yer one peeper winks, den, sah, peak de oar queek; and put in de irons." Jose scowled ferociously, and nodded assent; somewhat as a mastiff might show his teeth, and growl.

"Blast yer souls! See thet niggar gain on us." The fickle Bunkum had relented of his good streak, and again fell back upon his oaths; tuning up to the highest notes

in his gamut. "Who is it what don't pull in this ere boat? I'm twiggin' yer; an', by hokey! I'll punch ther head of any cuss what lets up a ha'r."

"Dat's um, chilun! Let out nuther link, honey dears. Dar we scoot! Dar we lap onter 'im. Sorry fur dat po' Nan-Tucket pusson. How de 'Sconset folks wul laf at 'im, fur gittin' beat by ar spec'ble culled genlem. How lubly dat ar Misser Bunkum mus' feel; he swar' so dreffly."

Just then the school dipped under water for a few minutes. While the whales were down, the bow-boat gained so as to lap half her length forward on the Nantucket boat. When the whales came up, the boats had approached quite near to them; but instead of the amiable white sinner keeping out on his side of the whale s wake, he crowded over upon the ebony saint, so as almost to lock oars. Bunkum kept square behind the whale, until close upon her flukes, and then attempted to thrust his boat over between Uncle Joe and the whale. This rude act riled the saintly old man beyond endurance; and prompted him to something desperate.

"Stand up, Coffin!" yelled Bunkum with a ringing oath. "Take her, soon ez yer can reach the hump. Put one iron inter the whale, an' t'other inter thet damned niggar!"

The bow of Bunkum's boat was just then ranging up over the flukes, in his mad attempt to go forward on the starboard side of the whale. Coffin peaked his oar, leaped to his feet, clutched his iron, and glared savagely around at the black boat-steerer, just then drawing up abreast of him; as if meditating the murderous act which he was ordered to do.

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"Pull hard, honeys. Few mo' strokes, an' dat whale am ourn. Neber min' dat wicked Misser Bunkum. Ef et cum ter harpoonin' niggars, hyah! dar's two genlem can play et dat game."

The old man grinned with a comical chuckle, as he took in the delicate situation of his opponent and saw the other boat lapped well up on the flukes; Coffin standing there with his iron drawn back, ready for the word to dart. The Christian brother could wait no longer for the baptismal act which he contemplated. The one lone peeper blinked like a setting star.

Up leaped the ferocious Jose, and grasped his harpoon. Bending his long snakish body back over the bowman, he let fly his huge iron over the head of the other boat, piercing home among the bone and sinews of the whale's small; the wickedest of all places to induce kicking.

Quick as a flash, the wounded whale let fly a tremendous up-cut with her flukes, cutting off six feet of the Emerald's boat at the bow; and sending the long gaunt boat-steerer flying fifty feet in the air. The whale stopped short, and Bailey's boat shot forward sufficiently for Jose to drive home his second iron under the hump of the kicking whale.

No one was seriously hurt among the Emerald's crew, but an acre of sprawling legs and arms came tumbling from aloft; followed by the mast and sail, which covered the uninjured Coffin, as with a white shroud, where he lay sprawling on the water, upheld by an oar.

Bunkum's end of the stoven boat filled, and rolled bottom up. Upon this, the big-bellied officer climbed; after a deal of puffing, swearing, and spluttering water — as pro-

fanity seemed to be his chief propelling power in swimming, as well as rowing. The crew were floating around on oars and paddles, endeavoring to pick up some of their personal wreckage of hats and coats.

"Eh, ar, dat's um, Jose Verd! T'ank de Lawd fur h'istin' dat ere po' sinner!" exclaimed Uncle Joe, in the pious fervor of his heart, when he saw no one had been killed.

"Peak de oars, chilun. Wet de line, tub-oarsman. Dem yare white folks mus'n't wenture 'tween dis ole nig an' him Dinah whale. 'Tain't ar pruper ting ter do; no sah-ee!"

The school felt the shock as well as Bunkum, though they did not swear; but they sounded straight downward, leaving the bow-boat's people a much needed breathing-spell in which to look about them. Uncle Joe's risibles were gleefully affected by the lively aquatic scene witnessed about a ship's length astern of his boat.

"Mussy seks! How butiful dose yar 'Tucket folkes duz swim. Hyah! ef dare ain't dat wicked old brudder Bunkum, shinin' up atop ob 'is yallar-bottom boat; zactly like ar seal on de rock." Just here Uncle Joe's soliloquy was interrupted by a yell, akin to that of a famished wolf:—

"Blood an' thunder! Here, you durned infernal niggar! Slack out yer line, an' pick me up; or by——" Bunkum's unholy demonstrations were terminated suddenly. Though he did not explode, as one might expect, he expanded with such violent combustion that he jostled the boat, and was soused over backwards into the sea. This made him so mad that it required the utmost exer-

tion of his stern propellers and side-wheels to get him safely back upon the yellow-bottomed boat again.

Much to the surprise of all, the water-soaked Mr. Bunkum seemed just as profane as his counterpart — the dry-clad, swearing Bill B. — for even after a second rescue from the wet water about him, the dripping Bill rattled off a string of oaths long as the main-bowline.

There he sat astride of the wrecked boat, from which he drove all others of the crew, poking the long wet hair from his pimpled face and lobster-colored nose; shaking his pondrous fist at Joe Bailey, the merry man of peace, who replied gleefully to Bunkum's impotent rage: —

"Why, bress yer, brudder Bunkum, dis niggar did hope yo' uns would hab ar change ob heart arter two baptisms. Mus' be, brudder Bill, dat yo' uns am ar dreffle wicked, hard-shell baptis', sah. But p'raps yo' won't steal no mo' whales. Eh, brudder Bill?"

"You slack out, an' pick us up; or blood an' blazes! ef I don't bung yer udder eye wus'n Mocha Dick ever did."

"Tut, tut, sah; yo' am preachin' frum de wrong tex. P'raps yo' wud like ter harpoon dis brack brudder? Tell yer what, Bill Bunkum, yo' sartinly makes ar werry spect'ble lookin' puffin' pig, histed up atop ob dat ar yallar boat."

And the old darkey laughed with a malicious relish over the sad pickle of the unrepentant spouter who had feloniously attempted to defraud him of his whale. And Uncle Joe actually let his boat drift back within easy talking distance of the pugnacious Bill, that he might taunt the profane wretch with his sins of omission, rather

than commission, because of his ill-success in stealing the whale of a poor old nigger man.

Just then the school "milled" short round, under water, and started to windward, the fast whale among them. The two ships lay hove to about a mile off. The boats, with the exception of the Emerald's third mate — who was pulling for the stoven boat — were keeping the weather-gauge of the fast whale, waiting for the school to come up.

Uncle Joe called his boat-steerer aft, and went forward to prepare for work. "Cum aft, heah, Jose, yo' lubly niggar, what did yo' work so butiful. Clar de lance dar, niggar Jim. Dere dey cums up, chilun. Hitch on, an' haul de line."

As the boat started ahead, Mr. Bailey turned to take a mock farewell of the man whom he so greatly despised. Lifting his palm-leaf hat gracefully, he bowed politely to the enraged blubber-hunter on the stoven boat, whose hatless head and purple face seemed ready to burst at the mock courtesy of his black brother. The whales came up, and these doughty whaling knights parted forever.

The last seen of the demoralized Bill Bunkum, there was a brimstone-colored cloud hovering about his impious head, which emitted flashes like a volcanic eruption. Possibly this was but a yellow gleam reflected from the bottom of his boat, and not sulphur fumes, as was supposed. But the bow-boat's crew never ceased to believe that it was the natural effect of Bunkum's terribly pungent oaths, which must have ignited like tinder, when he contemplated the joyous success of the "durned one-eyed niggar" whom he had failed to outwit.

"Coil de line clar, Jose, 'cause dish chile gwine ter grease de lance in sum dose critters. Dish yere cullud pusson am 'spected to do suffin fur de caus' ob de 'sulted brack man."

The jolly old whaleman chuckled at the good things which he contemplated. His sagacity and experience led him to behold all the elements of a successful whale-hunt in a school of cows and calves which had been thoroughly frightened by killers. Before the line could be hauled in, the fast whale had wiggled herself and calf into the middle of the school.

As the whales approached the ships, the two captains lowered their boats, and lay on their oars, hoping to strike as the school passed. The other boats were to leeward, pulling lustily after the fast boat, which had just got among the hindmost whales.

"Here we is, honeys, rite 'mong de schule. Dat'll do de line, chilun. Clar de third iron, an' gimme ar drug."

Bending the two implements on to a five-fathom warp, Uncle Joe watched his chance to fling a deadly iron into a loose whale. Gathering quickly in on the line, the boat ran alongside of a large cow, and Bailey let fly into her life. Blood followed, and the whale slacked back, until Braybrook caught up with it and fastened, holding on till she turned up, so that he could waif her.

Seeing the mate close astern, Uncle Joe lanced a loose whale and brought blood. Raymond pulled up and secured her. This second whale followed after the school till she died, leaving the mate in good position for another.

The captains met the school just then. Their boat-steerers stood up, irons in hand, apparently sure of a chance. But some sharp-eyed cow caught sight of the boats, and down went the whole body, running to windward of the ships while they were sounding. The bow-boat took that time to prepare two other drug irons. To one iron was attached a paddle, and to the other a large sealskin buoy.

When the school came up, the fast whale still led the herd, but there were two fat cows, with small calves, straggling a little one side of the trailing line. An inexperienced person could not conceive how the boat could be made to reach them. Uncle Joe eyed the fat prizes a moment, and saw that the two captains were pulling quickly up astern of him. Saintly old darkey that he was, he felt an unchristian desire to possess both whales; at least he would deprive the man Bunkum from catching either of them:—

"Jose! yo' seed dem yare two mudder cows?"

"Yis, ob course I duz," growled the black barbarian.

"An' duz yer seed dat are ole Cap'in Bunkum pullin' up dar fur one on um?"

For answer, the surly boat-steerer showed his rows of white teeth, and snarled like a terrier.

"Well, den, tek yo' oar and put dish niggar rite ober 'tween dem critters; same ez yo' put 'lasses 'tween two flapjacks."

Jose's eyes lit up like two burnt holes in a blanket. Grappling his steering-oar, he thrust it hard over to port. The boat swerved well to starboard, near enough to reach one of the whales; but that was not satisfactory, as was manifest from a deeply muttered oath in Portuguese.

"Well, well, honey dear; doan yer sw'ar, like dat ole Bill Bunkum; 'cause, Jose, de Lawd am wid us ter-day."

But a glance behind showed that Captain Bunkum would be upon them in five minutes. This brought another rumble of profanity from Jose.

"Tut, tut, po' chile; duz yo' wanter hab dish yere boat stove fur sw'arin'? Joe Bailey wull help yer do dat leedle job."

Taking out the chock-pin, Uncle Joe bowed the line over to the port cleat; and in an instant the boat swerved fairly in between the two cows. Captain Bunkum's crew were pulling hard for the starboard whale. Into that one, Bailey flung a drug-iron, which brought thick blood; and secured the whale just as the Emerald's boat-steerer was called up to take his iron.

Catching up his lance, the old darkey turned and thrust it into the port whale, bringing good blood just as Captain Talbert pulled up and fastened. The two cows, which had been so friendly in life, continued to run together till they died.

This double transaction caused the school to sound and run briskly, dropping Bunkum's two loose boats quickly astern. An event which induced Captain Bunkum to disclose the family traits of profanity, and brotherly love for the black race; Joe Bailey in particular.

Raymond and Braybrook had waifed their dead whales, and were now tugging hard at the oars to overtake the school while it was down. The Emerald's two boats were in a line with the Fleetwing's, so matters were approaching a crisis; but Uncle Joe was yet master of the situation. Slacking out his line, he took Raymond's boat in

tow, and again hauled back over the running school; taking the occasion to borrow a couple of harpoons and drugs from the mate.

When the school came up, the larboard boat was dropped, and took to her oars, having a quarter of a mile lead of the other boats. There was a pod of ten whales about the fast cow; the rest of the school were widely scattered. Uncle Joe hauled in among the pod and lanced three whales in as many minutes; two of which he secured with the mate's drug-irons, and Raymond secured the third one by fastening to it.

The whales again went down; the two drugged whales going with the school. Braybrook sprang ahead and was taken in tow by the fast boat, which gave a needed rest to his men. Uncle Joe secured one more drug-iron from the waist-boat, and in a few minutes was among the school again. At that time, he lanced two whales, throwing a drug-iron into one; and Braybrook secured the other.

There were now five other loose whales running with the fast one. Bailey had but one more drug-iron — the one with a paddle attached — and to lance the loose whales would be to kill them for the hated Bunkum and his mate; then tugging away close astern, ready to seize upon any lawful prize — a whale not harpooned.

The Fleetwing's boats were fully occupied for the time and still there were three drugged whales spouting blood, and following after the school, which required looking after, while the Emerald's boats were around. For a while Uncle Joe forbore lancing other whales lest they should accrue to the benefit of the Bunkum family; but fearing they would steal some of his drugged whales, he

finally deemed it expedient to employ the pilfering set in looking after whales of their own, honestly come by.

With this cunning policy in mind, the old whaleman again hauled into the pod, lanced two whales, and watched them slack slowly back until the Emerald's two boats grappled to them, almost with the relish of taking stolen property; for they could not quite believe that the old darkey contributed them for a purpose.

Then Uncle Joe hauled in between his own whale and another, threw his last drug-iron into the loose whale, and lanced and killed the fast one, meaning this to end his day's whaling.

While the bow-boat was slacking astern, glad of obtaining a moment's rest after their long, laborious slaughtering, up popped a large cow close along the opposite side of the fast whale. The instinct of the old whaleman was too strong to forbear a chance so tempting. Uncle Joe ordered the boat forward again, and reluctantly flung his lance into the fourteenth whale of that day's killing; almost relenting, when he saw that it must fall into the hands of the thievish Bunkum, for want of a harpoon to secure it.

As if Bailey's thought became parent to Bunkum's act, the latter soon after cut from his whale, and sprang ahead on his oars, to secure another. This so riled the old darkey that his inventive genius was soon brought to bear. Hauling quickly up to the fast whale, which was in a too moribund condition to have much feeling, he seized his spade and proceeded to cut out the second iron, which was imbedded in the thin blubber under the hump. Bunkum saw what was going on, and hove at his after oar with the utmost desperation, savage for another prize.

Bailey was none too quick, for hardly had he got the crooked iron out, and straightened and bent on to his line ready for a fling, before Bunkum's boat dashed up to the whale, ready for action. Just as the Emerald's boat-steerer sprang up and took his iron, Uncle Joe let fly his harpoon — having to dart far over the fast whale to reach the loose one — and secured his whale. But this did not prevent Bunkum's boat from fastening, ten seconds after, much to the amazement of Joe Bailey, whose iron stood straight up in the whale's back, before the very eyes of the boat-steerer.

"Here, you damned niggar! That's our whale. My iron was in fust. Cut off, an' begone with yer; or I'll punch yer head!" yelled the belligerent captain, intent upon a bluff game with the meek-looking, decrepit old darkey; who did not disclose the full force of his character on the surface, as his reply denoted:—

"Hyah! yo', Cap'n Bunkum. What's yo' up ter, sah? 'Pears like, ter dish chile, dat dose yar brudder Bunkums am 'bout ob ar size fur stealin'. Dar's Misser Bill; him tried leedle too hard ter rob dish niggar ob dat whale; an' de Lawd punished 'im fur it; an' now heah's Cap'n Ben am gwine ter gobble up dish one."

During this angry confab, the bow-boat was being drawn up close to the new whale, the Emerald's boat following close astern. Bailey reached down with a boat-hook and grappled Bunkum's line; hauled it up and cut the Nantucket thief adrift from the whale. This brought a howl, like that of a trapped wolf:—

"Damn yer black soul! How dare you cut off my line? I'll maul your life out if I get hold on yer."

"See yere, yo', Cap'n Bunkum, dish cullud pusson, dat yo' is sassin', am de Lawd's niggar; de man ob peace, sah; one dat lubs him brudder-man wid all de heart. But, sah! dere's nudder niggar in dish yere boat; de debble's own niggar! Dat udder Joe Bailey, what doan b'long to de Lawd. A wicked niggar, sah, dat lubs ter lock horns wid Satan. A niggar dat jist wanter dart ar lance fru any ole Bunkum-man dat lubs ter steal whales. Hyah! yo' lyin' ole Bunkum! Pull up dish way, queek; an' come an' lock horns wid de debble's niggar, in dish boat. Slack line dere, Jose! an' lemme git ar dart at dat ole scallowag Bunkum."

And true enough, there did seem to be a half-dozen strange-acting negroes in the bow of that boat, as Joe Bailey got out his two lances, ready for action. His usually saintly looking face was contorted like a demon's; and his one lone eye was flashing like a madman's; while his long lank body writhed, and swayed backward and forward, as if with savage impatience to get a dart at the thievish Bunkum. Captain Ben might have been a man of passable courage under some more favorable circumstances; but a more scared looking wretch never was seen than the man Bunkum, who suddenly took to his oars, and pulled for his ship; frequently sending a furtive glance behind, as if in mortal fear that the infuriated negro was on his track.

The Fleetwing's boats had pulled up and secured all the whales but the three with Uncle Joe. Soon as the demonized old man could get cooled down a little, he undertook the task of heading his trio of whales round to leeward. Beginning with the fast whale, he made shallow

lance-thrusts near around the starboard eye, which soon had the effect of heading the cow off toward the other boats. As but one of the other whales followed after, the remaining whale had to be left behind, for the ship to keep run of, till it died.

When the bow-boat passed to leeward of the other boats, the ship was just coming to pick up the windward group of nine dead whales. By the time Bailey's two whales turned up, the ship was seen coming down before the wind with her nine fat prizes in tow. Braybrook had been sent to windward for the twelfth whale, which died soon after; then the waist-boat hooked on, and towed toward the ship, assisted by a crew of shipkeepers sent off in the captain's boat.

The sun was getting low when the last of the twelve whales was secured alongside. But it required many tacks for the loggy old Emerald to beat up to her two gift-whales, — from Joe Bailey's lance, — and the sun was fairly set before she reached them. She was about a mile to the south of the Fleetwing when she fluke-roped her two prizes.

As the weather promised fair, sail was shortened, and the Fleetwing lay by her whales till early dawn. It was a good two day's work before the last carcass was cut adrift, and ten days before the oil was wholly taken care of. The largest of the fat cows made forty-five barrels; but several of the smallest did not exceed twenty; yet the total sum was good, as the twelve stowed down four hundred and twenty barrels, which was an average of thirty-five.

It was reported by the boat-watchers that the Emerald

kept up a brilliant flare with scraps during the night; and it was thought, by the numerous lanterns seen flitting about, that she cut in her whales before midnight. Before morning, the profane and thievish Bunkums had taken themselves off to parts unknown; and it would not have been pleasant for two of their officers to face Joe Bailey, after that eventful day's work.

CHAPTER XXXII.

DOUBLING CAPE HORN.

IT was the last day of January when the Fleetwing approached the most southern of all straits, the Le Maire. While coasting south along the land from River La Plata, the ship had been favored with strong, fair winds and pleasant weather. There was now a fair promise of soon doubling Cape Horn, and going on their way into the Pacific. Captain Talbert had intended looking for right whales while passing the "Main Bank"; but as the continuous strong winds would have prevented lowering the boats, the ship was kept on her course.

At noon, January 31, the meridian latitude was found to be 54°. While striking eight bells, land was raised from the topsail-yard. It was Terra del Fuego, the high land near its eastern point. The ship was just forty-one miles due north of the Straits of Le Maire, through which she would pass on her way to the Cape, the captain having prudently avoided going to the east of Staten Island — the old beaten track — where the weather is more boisterous, and a strong head-current ever meets a south-bound ship.

It was now blowing a clear sunny gale from the northwest, and the proximity to the Patagonian coast prevented the seas running large. The ship was going merrily under

double-reefed topsails, courses, and inner jib, steering south by east, which course headed her fair for the Straits, as there is one point western variation of the compass to be allowed for. At half-past two in the afternoon the ship passed Cape San Diego and entered Le Maire. The Fleetwing had made seventeen miles an hour since meridian, as verified by the noon latitude, and the observed distance from the land; a trifle of this speed might be attributed to a little southern current.

The gale piped on very hard while the ship was running through the Straits, and it took the fleet thing just two hours to pass clear into the dread Southern Ocean. The course, as was carefully noted, when coasting close along the west shore, was found to be due south (by compass), which differs greatly from the trend of the land as given on the charts of that day. These exact observations came to be providential in the near future.

During several days back, the officers had noticed that when the moon set, the gale shifted from northwest to west, and sometimes to the southwest. This phenomenon now happened again. The moon set three hours after the ship passed Le Maire, and the gale shifted suddenly round to the southwest, dead ahead for the ship, and before midnight it had hauled to the south. Cape Horn was like to prove tricky as ever, for this shift of wind brought the ship on a lee-shore. The night was dark and rainy, with heavy seas, and a strong Antarctic current runing to the east.

This situation required a press of sail to be kept on the ship, to hold her off the land till daylight. When day broke, matters were no better, for a drizzly rain had

shut down upon them, and land could not be seen a hundred fathoms away. But the vessel was still kept on the western tack, that she might lee-bow the eastern current and make less drift towards the land. It was an anxious time for all; the old croakers were silent and sullen, and would have relished making a sacrifice of a certain saintly resident of the cabin. Working thus, in a current-way, there was no certainty of the ship's position from one hour to another.

In the midst of the anxiety and gloom, the Fleetwing came up to a large black merchantman, four times the tonnage of the whaler. Companionship at such a time is pleasant; it seems to lessen the danger by dividing it. It gave a lift to the hearts of the Fleetwings to see that they could outwind and outsail this huge merchantman, whose crew looked on with amazement to see the little whaler leave them behind in the dismal gloom. It shocked their officers, and impressed them with the belief that they were drifting faster upon the land than they were. They began immediately to make sail, though the vessel had previously been crowded hard as she could bear.

It was about three o'clock in the afternoon before the rain ceased, and then only for a moment. A narrow rift cleared to the land, and then shut down thicker than ever, the gale piping on furiously. The sharp eyes of Raymond and Bailey had discovered a well remembered headland of the Straits. It was less than five miles off, under their lee, and was not visible more than a minute and a half.

The captain was hastily called out, and the situation made known to him. At the present rate of drift, the

ship would go ashore before midnight, if the wind did not change. It was deemed best to make a dash through the rain, and take the chance of running back through the Straits. The main spencer and reefed mainsail were taken in, the after yards squared, and the ship put dead before the gale, venturing to run back through Le Maire upon that one brief glimpse of the land.

After running for half an hour, soundings were got with the deep-sea lead; giving thirty fathoms, with gravel bottom; which fully confirmed the ship's supposed position in the Straits. They had now only to steer a north course, by compass — with a little easting, by way of precaution — to go fairly through the Straits, where they could haul up west, and find smooth water and good shelter under the land.

At the end of two hours and a half, the yards were braced up, and the ship's head put to the west, though raining and blowing hard. In less than half an hour the ship ran under the Fuego shore, the rain let up, and the weather became clear. The whaler George Washington, and their old friend the Rainbow, were there found snuggled under the Cape; waiting for fair weather to pass the Straits. Captain Plasket had not taken any oil since the ships separated on the Abrolhos. The Washington, which sailed two weeks before the Fleetwing, hailed four hundred and fifty barrels of sperm, and two hundred barrels of humpback oil, all taken near around the Falklands.

The gale continued two days, followed by a day of calm. The three captains went ashore on a gunning expedition, bringing off half a boatload of fat duck, and a number of

kelp geese; together with rabbits, and a fine fur seal, which was shot by Captain Talbert. Edwards, of the Washington, gathered nearly ten bushels of penguin eggs, being the only one of the three captains having a fondness for such provender — a mixture of a little egg and much sawdust.

Early the following day, a light air sprang up from the northwest, but as a strong northern tide was running through the Straits, which the ships could not stem, they were obliged to wait for a strong wind or a turn in the tide. The wind freshened up quickly with the young ebb, and the three vessels steered south through Le Maire; the Washington being five miles ahead, by catching a more favorable start of wind. When about half way through the passage, the Washington was seen to brace up her yards, and haul square in to the land; and she soon after lowered two boats, which pulled for the shore.

When the Fleetwing came up to her companion, a large merchantman was seen wrecked against the cliff. Dead bodies were strewn high among the rocks, and entangled among broken spars and bales of goods. From the smoke seen rising out of a little cove near at hand, Captain Edwards had concluded that some of the survivors might be found. Each of the other ships sent in a boat, to render such assistance as was needed. Only three men and a child were found alive; the mate, two seamen, and the captain's little daughter, twelve years of age. The vessel was the ship Goethe, of Bremen, for Valparaiso. Captain Edwards took all of the survivors aboard of his ship, as he designed to stop at Conception for recruits. At that port the noble ship was burnt, set

on fire by one of her crew. While burning, the Washington was run upon a shoal in the harbor. The crew disclosed the criminal, who was severely flogged in the rigging, on the burning wreck, and then delivered to the Spanish authorities; so that the George Washington was never seen by her companions after that day.

Again the ships squared away through the Straits, the wind breezing up fresh, and the weather clear. As they came out into the stormy ocean, they saw several partly disabled merchantmen; among them was the big black ship which the Fleetwing had passed during the gale. Foretopmast, maintopgallant-mast, and jib-booms were carried away. Her crew were hard at work sending out new booms, and hoisting a new topmast aloft. One ship had carried away her rudder, and had got it on deck trying to repair it. Another vessel was trying to fish a broken topsail yard aloft; splintering the spar with split stunsail booms, and serving over the whole with hemp-rope. They were mishaps which draw largely upon the sympathies of seamen, but serve to cast a ghostly gloom over all on board for a while.

At daylight the Fleetwing was abreast of Barnevelt Island, and Cape Horn was in sight. The Rainbow was fifteen miles astern, and the other ship was nowhere to be seen. At noon, the latitude was 56° 03′, just four miles south of the Horn, which was then twelve miles distant, to the westward. The ship was making nine knots, but there was a three-knot current to stem, and it was two o'clock before Cape Horn Island bore north, two miles away, and the ship edged away into the great Pacific Ocean. A furious surf was beating against the

sharp black rocks of the dread Horn — the most famous turning-point in ocean navigation.

A score of merchantmen were seen far away offshore. Scared navigators, who timidly house their light spars, and shudder with superstitious fears as they approach the treacherous cape. Wrongfully keeping a wide offing from the land; not knowing, or not heeding, that the closer in one keeps on the green water, the less current and smoother sea are found; not to speak of the smaller circle and shorter track sailed when very near in with the land.

Says wise old Uncle Joe: Never go off of green water by day, or outside of the gull-cries in the night; birds that rarely go beyond the edge of green-water soundings. The old veteran had spent many years among the islands thereabout, and could make a good harbor in any gale that blows, if the weather be clear.

The ship kept to her west course, passing north of the San Diegos; the north rock lying in latitude 56° 25′. False Cape Horn, in latitude 55° 43′, was left twenty miles to the north. St. Ildefonso and York Minster were passed before night; and the ship began to edge away to the northwest, carrying a fresh breeze from the north-northeast.

It was midsummer, and the weather held good, as it ought, for several days. The wind gradually worked round to the east and the south, and finally settled in the southwest. By that time the ship had got where she could keep away to the north, as Captain Talbert was intent upon keeping to the edge of green water until the ship reached the islands of Huafo and Mocha, both of which are great resorts of sperm-whalers.

But two men in the ship knew that this was another new-fangled notion of Uncle Joe; for not a soul on board had ever coasted the storm-lashed shores of western Patagonia. It was not supposed to be a safe cruising-ground, or a place where ships could find much weather suitable for lowering their boats.

It was left for this illiterate old whaler, sealer, and prophet, to teach navigators that, whereas, there is a strong and dangerous influx of currents on the west coast of Africa, which drifts many vessels ashore when becalmed, and helps to wreck them in a gale, yet the very reverse is the case along the whole South American coast.

It happens in this wise: In the Atlantic, the warm eastern drift is an equatorial *surface*-current; located in a belt of calms, sweeping landward whatever it grapples; and thus wrecks many vessels in the Bight of Biafra, and elsewhere on the dread African coast. While in the Pacific, the cold Antarctic current which dashes in against the Spanish Main, being at a temperature of 40° and under, keeps ever to the ocean-floor, and strikes the coast-line as a *sub-current;* thence welling upward to the surface, with a constant rebound from the land; and thus becomes a wonderful safeguard to shipping.

Keeping on up the coast, the Fleetwing passed near in off Tres Montes (three mountains), where abundant evidence of sperm whales was seen; such as blackfish, porpoises, and pieces of half-masticated squid. This induced the captain to order up the cutting tackles; which were overhauled, refitted, and lashed to the masthead, ready for reeving the cutting-falls. The lookouts were increased, and the boats put in prime condition ready for use.

While off Cape Taytao, in latitude 46°, it fell flat calm. The ship was left drifting about, less than five miles out from the land. The wind had been fresh from the south-west several days, which created a long heavy undulation that hove in on the shore with a thundering crash, creating considerable anxiety among the uninitiated.

Throughout the night, the ship was swept up and down the shore by the tides, rolling and pitching uneasily in the swell. The chains had been bent, and a tackle got up ready to lift the anchors from the bows, in case of need. The boats were fitted with extra provisions, and the officers had tucked their valuables under the stern-sheets, half expecting to have to leave the ship before morning.

But at daylight the ship was found eight miles out from the land, and Joe Bailey's strange statement of an outflowing current began to be credited. The mystery was made greater in those days, as nothing was then known about a sub-current. Yet Uncle Joe had known about the outflow for fifty years, and attributed it to the constant flow of snow-water from the shore.

Before the lookouts fairly reached the cross-trees that morning, they began to cry out about whales. The ship was in the midst of a vast school of seventy-barrel sperm whales. Breakfast was hastily served while the boats were being got ready by the shipkeepers, and the four boats went down among them.

Captain Talbert soon struck an eighty-barrel whale, which started the school offshore. The loose boats followed to the edge of green water, where the whales stilled down and all three boats fastened to seventy-barrel

whales. The captain's whale sounded to the bottom of shoal water, and was easily killed when he came up.

As the ship still lay becalmed, Captain Talbert went aboard ship and sent Mr. Antoine back to lie by the whale. About ten o'clock a light breeze came off from the land, and the ship fanned slowly along to the whale, and took him alongside. The ship was then headed off-shore after the boats, which had disappeared ; and were not in sight even from the masthead.

Late in the afternoon, the top of a boat-sail was discovered far away over the horizon. It proved to be the mate's boat, with a blue waif flying high above the mast, which was not visible until the white sail beneath it was seen. Soon after, the other two boats were raised up, all three lying by whales, not far from each other. Before sunset the whales were safe alongside, and a good two days' cutting was before the crew. Though the ship was in a stormy latitude, all hands were sent below until an hour before daylight, when breakfast was served, and cutting began in earnest.

While boiling was going on, the ship worked in and off from the edge of green water, some thirty miles out, to the shore. When about sixty miles to the north of Taytao, close in off Hamblin Island, whales were again seen; probably the same school, as they were seventy-barrel whales. The three larboard boats were sent down. Mr. Antoine remained aboard to keep up the boiling. The mate and second mates got fast, and killed their whales without trouble ; and two hours after, they were taken alongside, and the ship made ready for cutting.

Before the two whales were fairly cut in, it came on to

blow a smart gale, directly onshore. This mishap made it necessary to hoist in the last head whole, as there was not time to separate the case and junk, with the ship making a dead drift upon the land. The head of a seventy-barrel cachalot is an enormous weight to put upon a ship's mainmast. But two tackles were hooked to it, all hands sent to the windlass, and the head was hove in. It was placed between the weather-rail and the mainmast, and lashed with double lashings to mast, rail, and ring-bolts.

Storm sails were then got upon the ship, and she began slowly to claw offshore. The tryworks had to be cooled down, as the spray began to fly into the pots and blacken the oil.

The change of the moon, her perigee, and a high southern declination now coincided — a combination of the three worst signs for bad weather. The barometer was low, and falling fast, evidence that a tremendous gale would follow. Before there was time to see whether the ship could claw off from the land or not, a drizzly rain shut out every vestige of the shore. The deep-sea lead was kept going hourly, throughout the night, but no bottom was found at a hundred fathoms; which served to relieve the anxiety of the deck-watch.

At daylight the ship was in blue water, heading west-northwest, which was a good enough offing for such a ship to hold to. Sail was shortened, and the ship labored less. Finding that she made easy work of the gale, and that the seas had become regular, an awning was rigged over the trypots, and the works started up again. The boiling was driven hard, as the thrashing about of the blubber in the

'tween-decks was pressing the oil from it, and much would be lost.

It remained stormy for a week, at times blowing very hard, so that the tryworks had to be cooled down for many hours. The deck was getting greatly cumbered with oil; yet it was difficult stowing it in the hold while the heavy seas were boarding the vessel. When the wind dropped, and the sun came out at the end of the week, — to the surprise of all, the ship was found to be two hundred miles offshore. She was headed round for the land, and, without making sail, all hands applied themselves to stowing away the several hundred barrels of oil which lumbered the deck; and the work had to be carried far into the night.

The next morning the ship ran among a body of right whales, on what is known as the Chili Ground, located on the southern edge of the great plateau which extends more than a thousand miles out from the coast. Juan Fernandez and Massafuero are the only islands upon it; though the depth of water does not vary much from fourteen hundred or fifteen hundred fathoms over many thousand square miles.

All the officers of the Fleetwing but Mr. Bailey were right whalers, and they now scented their old game and begged Captain Talbert to let them go down and tackle the coal-black fellows. The three larboard boats were sent down, and Raymond and Braybrook soon fastened to two fat cows, about one hundred and twenty barrels each.

Braybrook's whale brought round to, and was easily killed. The mate's whale ran to windward like a race-horse. Here was game of a different calibre from the

cachalot. A right whale can make no fight with his head. A penknife thrust into his nose will send him under water stern-foremost — head over heels. But his tail is a wonderful fighting implement. While a sperm usually strikes up and down, the right whale can sweep over a half-circle, more than his own length in diameter. Thus, bowing on is much more dangerous than with a sperm whale. Raymond nearly chopped the tail off of his whale so that she could not kick, and then hauled forward and killed her without danger. The whales were found so numerous, and so easily caught, that Captain Talbert concluded to try and make up his voyage among them. The result was that at the end of two months' whaling the Fleetwing was full, with a deckload besides. She had taken seventeen whales, that averaged ninety barrels; which, with her sperm oil, comprised three thousand seven hundred and thirty barrels, all told.

Sail was made for Valparaiso. During the passage there was just time to wash the ship clean, and give her hull a coat of paint inside and out. Captain Talbert hoped to find a ship in port that would freight home the oil. That accomplished, he would give Raymond the ship, and embark for home with his family.

The winds baffled, and proved so light that the ship was ten days reaching Valparaiso. Early one morning she doubled round the big headland, ran in off the stone pier and dropped anchor. When sails were furled, the larboard watch were given liberty on shore; and during the month the watches alternated day after day; the seamen being daily allowed money enough to raise a breeze in the "foretop," or the "cross-trees," high up in the sailor cockloft of the town.

The captain and ladies took up their residence ashore. Early in the day the boat returned with the ship's mail and fresh provisions, and fruit for all on board. Raymond received letters from his mother's family, together with one from Mr. Lawrence, and two from Miss Nellie.

His mother and sisters were delighted with the ship's early success; and full of wonder at the friendliness expressed by his new-found friends, the Lawrences. They had not only visited the family, but had entertained them all for a week at their Boston home.

Mr. Lawrence's letter was full of warm, paternal affection. While sending much wholesome advice to his adopted boy, he begged him to contemplate his future through other eyes; give up the sea, and come home to those dear ones who had learned to love him so well. The dear old man ended by saying: "Charles, I shall claim the privilege of looking after your mother and sisters during the voyage, for I have found them worthy of the noble son of my adoption."

Ardent little Nellie's letters were purposely reserved to the last. Of course, curiosity and other human interests were thumping at Raymond's heart, eager to know the contents of the precious missives. Still the mate delayed, and read their strange superscription — C. Raymond Lawrence — over and over, before he ventured to open them; fearing lest the dear girl should persuade him from the iron-bound path which he had tracked out for himself. It need not be concealed how wildly his heart beat while he examined the dates, and took the earliest one to open. Not till that moment did Raymond know how deeply the beautiful girl had wormed into his affection.

It was evidently a sweet, ardent epistle, for Raymond read it through twice in succession, with tears in his eyes to the last. Folding the eloquent missive, he put it tenderly back into its envelope, with a degree of painstaking which expressed the value he put upon it.

Taking up the second letter, this strong, well balanced man again hesitated before opening it, as if he felt it possible that Nellie might induce him to give up his well ordered plans for the future. He had got accustomed to the girl's endearments in the first letter, and now ventured to read some paragraphs of the second one aloud to himself, for the pleasure it might yield his aural nerves — an egotistical habit of bachelors: —

DEAR, DEAR RAYMOND, — My noble, my darling brother, if you knew how we all yearn for you here at home, you would not stay out on the hateful sea any longer.

What do you think? Every soul in our circle is just wild to make your acquaintance, and show you the homage which your manly acts deserve. Lots of girls have set their caps for you already. But, dear Raymond, we know something, don't we? which we sha'n't tell any one, at present. Yet, I am not a bit jealous, for I want everybody to love you, *almost* as much as I do.

Do you know, dear brother, that I have recited that dreadful shipwreck so often — to the hundreds of newcomers every day — that the adventure grows daily upon me, until it is now twice as much of a story as when it happened. I fear I have inbibed a sailor's way of story-telling. Do, pray, tell it lots of times yourself, so that

your recital may seem almost as wonderful as mine; that my story may not seem to others *deceptio visus*.

And, dearest, something of that sort is taking place in my ever increasing affection for you. As you will remember, I used to tell you that I loved you. How tame such an expression seems to me now. Oh, oh! I can now find no words of endearment good enough to express how dear you have become to me. I can only say that your little Nellie's life must remain a dreary blank while you are absent. So, do, do come home to me, my more than brother.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

BOUND FOR THE LAST PORT.

THE Fleetwing lay idling a month at Valparaiso, hoping some vessels might arrive which could be chartered for home freight. Mr. Nye, the New Bedford agent, sent word up and down the coast, south to Valdivia, and north to Callao, trying to secure a ship for the purpose.

Despairing of success, recruits were taken aboard, anchor weighed, and sail made for the Sandwich Islands. After a month of pleasant sailing across the unvarying trades, the majestic snow-peaks of Hawaii were discerned one morning, and early on the following day the Fleetwing ran down along the beautiful reef off Waikiki, to Honolulu, flying her signal for a pilot.

Soon a hundred bare-backed Kanakas gathered down on the harbor-reef to grapple the towline, as Captain Meek, the pilot, sailed out in his boat, and waited to windward of the "Middle Ground" for the coming ship. The fresh trades were just fluttering down the Nuuanu as the ship brailed her courses, swung her yards sharp up, and shot through the narrow opening in the reef. In a twinkling every sail was clewed up, leaving the ship to shoot onward into the very eye of the wind, under bare poles, and before her headway was checked a towline was

in the hands of the natives, who ran the fleet thing into her anchorage off Fort Point.

When the sails were clewed up, a boat was despatched ashore to notify Mr. Richards that his intended had arrived, and anxiously awaited his coming. He, in turn, hastened a messenger to Father Damon, to catch the godly man before he went to the Bethel, for it was a Sabbath morning, as well as a wedding-day.

Mrs. Talbert and Raymond were to act as best man and maid, and Captain Talbert accepted the paternal office of giving away the beautiful bride. The meeting of the lovers was all that could be expected of a happy pair about to enter into the holy bonds of wedlock.

Asenith Allston never looked fresher or more beautiful than on the morning of her bridal. The voyage had greatly improved her appearance, having added forty pounds to her slight weight, which amount of avoirdupois seemed to have been most judiciously distributed for the occasion.

After the ceremony, when the congratulations had been offered by all present, Uncle Joe and Braybrook being of the number, it was arranged that Captain Talbert, wife, and child should accompany the happy pair ashore. They gladly accepted an invitation to breakfast with Mr. and Mrs. Richards, at their pretty home up the Nuuanu, previous to going in search of permanent quarters in the vicinity of the Mansion House.

Raymond declined joining the bridal party, under the plea of trying to get his letters from the post-office. Nor could the obdurate fellow be made to yield to Mrs. Richards' tearful importunity. At parting, Raymond heartily

wished Asenith all the happiness which she deserved, adding that he should not fail to be a frequent visitor at her pleasant home.

In reply, tears found their way to Mrs. Richards' eyes, and what she said was meant for his ear alone, so that the reader can only have it in strictest confidence: "Thanks, dear Raymond, for all your many kindnesses to me in the past. Believe me, noble man, I shall never forget you; never cease to love you. For you alone have made it possible for me to keep my troth-plight to George Richards — my husband.

"If I have not attained to the highest meed of happiness to which I aspired — and who could have resisted the temptation? — I blame no one; but I shall bless one man with my dying words. Believe me, dear Raymond, I have never failed to acknowledge, in my inmost heart, that the precious guerdon which would have made a very heaven for me should rightfully be reserved for beautiful Nellie Lawrence, the sweetest and brightest mortal I have known. May the Heavenly Father hasten your nuptials with her."

The repeated calls from the deck, saying that the boat was ready, interrupted the sad parting; which was becoming very affecting for both. The young bride hastily dried her tears, and, with one last agonizing look of affection upon him she loved so well, dropped her veil to hide her tear-stained cheeks and blushing face, and went out on deck. Raymond accompanied her, and with a bustling air made himself useful till the party embarked; then took another boat and went ashore by himself.

Searching out the Hawaiian official, the mate succeeded

in getting the ship's mail from the post-office. Hastening aboard, he sorted out and distributed the letters to others, without attempting to read any of his own during the passage off; though he saw that there were two well-filled letters from Mr. Lawrence, and four sweet-scented missives from Nellie; which, odd fellow that he was, he deferred reading until he had thoroughly perused both of her father's.

In Mr. Lawrence's last letter, the old gentleman sent word that he had ordered the captain of the ship Nellie Lawrence — which was then discharging cargo at San Francisco — to stop at Honolulu on his way to China, and, if a good freight offered, to accept it. He added, with much show of affection: —

"Now, my dear boy, if you can make use of Nellie's ship — as we call her — for freight and passage for yourself, or for dear old Captain Talbert and family, you are welcome to do so. I need not tell you how it would gladden my old heart to hear, overland, that you were coming home in the ship.

"I have ordered Captain Block to be guided wholly by your instructions. He fully understands our relations; and he will not likely lose sight of the fact that he will have to look to you, in the near future, for all his orders. May the divine Providence which directed and over-ruled your humane act on those dread days in mid-ocean, still guide and protect you, my dear boy, is our constant prayer, when we nightly kneel at the footstool of God."

Nellie's letter of the earliest date was upon a subject familiar to us all, and may be given in full, as far as it relates to the subject in question: —

My dear Raymond, — Oh, how my heart bleeds for you at this moment. Your letter dated from Abrolhos Banks has just reached me, and I have cried over it like a baby. Nearly all of the tears are for you, dear Raymond; though I suppose some of them are for myself, wicked girl that I am, to weep joyful tears over your dreadful mishap.

Your story about that awful Miss Tudor makes me hate her. Oh, my precious, my darling brother, how could she slight you — one so noble and so good? Would that I were there to love and console you for the loss of that perfidious creature. But you will not mourn over one whose act proves her unworthiness. Write and tell me that you will not take it too much at heart.

Dear brother, you must feel in your deep heart that there are others who can love you a thousand times better than that unfaithful girl. Dear Raymond, do hasten home, and let us prove to you how much you are prized by pa and me — your own little Nellie. Of course, you won't attempt another voyage now; will you, dearie? feeling so badly as you do about that hateful creature! Promise me in your next that you will not accept the Fleetwing if she is offered you. Put the promise in the very first paragraph of your letter.

I'll tell you my thought about this matter: If you must go to sea, pa has such beautiful ships, any of which you can have; come home in the Nellie Lawrence, — my ship, — which will be in Honolulu in a few months, and then go captain of her; wouldn't that be nice, dear brother? Now, say, wouldn't you like to become captain of the Nellie? Pa and I would go to sea with you, I

guess, if you wished to have us. I think we could enjoy ourselves so much out on the water.

Good-by, with a thousand kisses from pa and me.

P. S. — Remember, Raymond dear, that I pray for you (sometimes to you) every night of my life. So you see that there are *two* little "Cherubs sitting up aloft, watching over the life of *my* dear Jack." Lots more of loving kisses; as a postscript should end with them, as well as a letter, from your loving NELLIE.

Among Raymond's package was a letter post-marked New Bedford, written in a painstaking, school-girl hand. When about to open it, he instinctively guessed whom it might be from, and abstained from breaking the seal, which was stamped with a pair of cooing doves.

Raymond and Braybrook attended church in the afternoon at the seamen's Bethel, and after service the mate went to the captain's rooms, while Braybrook went aboard. When Mrs. Talbert was shown the unopened letter, she at once declared that it was Mary Tudor's handwriting, and showed Raymond a letter which she had received from Mary, in which the girl pleaded her cause, and put the blame wholly on her mother.

When convinced of this fact, the mate called for an envelope, and, in spite of Mrs. Talbert's entreaty, enclosed and superscribed the ill-timed letter to Miss Tudor. Calling for a Kanaka boy to mail the unwelcome missive, he hastily sent it off, lest he should be tempted to open it, as Mrs. Talbert wished, the dear lady's curiosity being very much aroused upon the occasion.

Captain Talbert was very much pleased to learn that

the ship Nellie Lawrence would call at Honolulu, seeking for a charter, as she was just the kind of ship for a safe freighter, and in which he wished to go home.

On the following day the captain, officers, and boat-steerers of the Fleetwing went before Judge Allen, the American Consul, to ship for another voyage. Charles R. Lawrence was shipped as captain, and he took this opportune moment to go before the world under his new name.

Braybrook was shipped as mate, and it was with tears in his eyes that he thanked Captain Lawrence for the berth. George Morey became second mate, though Mr. Bailey had been offered the berth. Uncle Joe, Mr. Joseph, Hoogley, Tahiti, and Jose Verd, retained their old positions on the new voyage; Pico shipped to steer Mr. Morey.

This much accomplished, the crew were sent ashore, and told by the consul they could have their choice, to join the new voyage, or be discharged at Honolulu after the ship had discharged her cargo.

Headed by old Tom, Buntline, and 'Tucket, the men came promptly forward and reshipped, under Captain Lawrence, at a small advance in the pay of all. For the next three weeks the crew were given daily liberty, taking watch and watch ashore; having horse-riding to their hearts' content. While the dance-halls and grogshops resounded with the merry songs of the roistering men.

Captain Lawrence took up his residence on shore with the Talberts. At the end of three weeks, the Nellie Lawrence hove in sight, ran down off the port, and lay off and on: while Captain Block came ashore to learn if his ship was wanted. Strange to say, Dr. Greeville was in the

boat with the captain. He had taken passage at San Francisco for China; and having a great desire to see something of the coral islands, he gladly took passage in the Fleetwing at her new captain's invitation.

Captain Lawrence met the boat at the wharf, and immediately went before the consul; who drew up a charter for the Nellie Lawrence, binding her to take freight and passengers to the port of New Bedford, which was signed, and delivered in duplicate to Captain Block. This accomplished, the captain took a pilot, went off, and brought his ship in, and moored her alongside of the Fleetwing.

Early next morning the work of discharging the oil began. As great care was taken in the cooperage and stowage, under the sharp eye of Braybrook, nearly three weeks passed before the Fleetwing was emptied, and lay with a swept hold; waiting for the whitewashers to cleanse her, over and over, from stem to stern; till the hold was sweet, and ready for the stevedores to stow a ground-tier of salt water.

The ship's sea-provisions were next got aboard from the storehouse on the wharf, where they had been stored in bond during the trans-shipment of the oil and whalebone. Then came a supply of fresh water, and recruits for a cruise; and it was announced by the mate that the Fleetwing was ready for her new voyage, seemingly under the best of auspices.

As the Fleetwing's oil did not make more than half a cargo for the Nellie Lawrence, Captain Block was ordered to lie in port until the fall fleet came in, to obtain a full freight. Only about twenty whalers

had yet straggled into port from the northern whale-grounds.

The day before the Fleetwing sailed, the Talberts gave a sumptuous dinner at the Mansion House, in honor of Captain Lawrence, whose romantic story made him very popular among the merchants and residents of Honolulu. Though there were but twenty whale-captains in port at the time, yet a jolly party of fifty, including the merchants and their wives, were seated at the grand repast.

Among those present, were some of the old-time ship-chandlers; whose honored names must ever be linked with the vast whale-fleets of that, and subsequent days, when more than two hundred whale-ships have visited Honolulu during a season. Of the resident merchants held in greatest popularity, were Captains James Magee, Tom Spencer, and Charles Brewer; together with Ben Pitman of Hilo, and Gorham D. Gilman of Lahaina, well favored representatives of the great mercantile houses of Hawaii.

Mr. and Mrs. Richards had not been forgotten, as Captain Lawrence was deemed an honored friend at the Grotto, their pleasant home up the Nuuanu. The popular Father Damon was there, with his cultured lady, to say grace before the breaking of bread, and obtain a new subscriber to the "Friend"; and finally, to proffer a kindly benediction at the conclusion of the happy occasion, when all gathered about the young captain to bid him God speed upon his new voyage — the end of which was not yet.

The singular story of the Fleetwing's finding the haunt of Mocha Dick; the death of the murderous whale by Joe Bailey, after following thirty years upon his track; the ship's being crushed by the demon whale; together with other equally strange events of the Fleetwing's subsequent voyage, form a sequel which must be deferred for another narrative.

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